

NEWSLETTER

TERM 1 2025



Our Cover Stars:

Pupils at the unveiling of their artwork for Golding Home's hoarding art project (turn to page 3)

Inside this issue:

- Unveiling of pupil artwork
- FAWbulous projects Launch Event
- A fantastic results day
- EYFS Class Updates

Dates for your diary:

Monday 27th October — First day of term 2
Friday 31st October — Spooky Clothes Day
Monday 3rd November — Parent Consultations
Friday 14th November — Children In Need
Friday 5th December — Christmas Jumper Day
Saturday 6th December — FAW Magical Grotto
Wednesday 10th December — Winter Fairs Loose
Friday 12th December — Winter Fair Snodland
Wednesday 17th December — Christmas Dinner
Thursday 18th December — Christmas Clothes & Parties

Loose Boughton Lane, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9QF Telephone: 01622 743925

Snodland The Wolfe Building, Malling Road, Snodland ME6 5HS Telephone: 01634 566890

Oxford Road 29 Oxford Road, Maidstone, ME15 8DF Telephone: 01622 392205

Peggy's Message

As we come to the end of a busy and exciting first term, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new pupils, parents, carers, and staff who have joined the Five Acre Wood community this year. It has been wonderful to see everyone settling in so well and embracing the spirit of our school.

For those of you that have been with us for a while, you may have noticed that our newsletter has a new look! Each term, we will be featuring class updates from a particular learning approach, and this term we are focusing on EYFS. We hope you enjoy reading about all the fun, creativity, and discovery taking place in our youngest classes.

This term has been filled with fantastic learning opportunities, special events, and new beginnings. We have supported a couple of important awareness days, including Jeans for Genes and wear yellow for World Mental Health Day, helping our pupils understand the value of empathy, inclusion, and kindness.

We have also celebrated the launch of several exciting projects that are already making a real difference to school life — including our radio station, roastery, library, soft play bus, and more. A huge thank you to everyone involved in bringing these initiatives to life. Without your support and generosity, we would not be seeing the many positives that have already come from these projects.

It has been lovely to see our pupils making the most of the change in season, exploring the colours, textures, and magic of autumn in our outdoor learning environments. Our new forest school provision has provided a lovely space for play and exploration, fostering independent creative learners.

It has also been wonderful to welcome families into school for coffee mornings and tailored stay and play sessions. The interaction and engagement between home and school are truly special and make such a positive impact on our pupils' experiences. We recently had our Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) reassessment which helps us strengthen further the partnership between home and school, supporting you and your child's learning. Listening to your feedback, we hope the communications guide sent out recently has been helpful and we will continue to review and assess our methods, and will share the outcome of the LPPA assessment once it is complete.

I must also take this opportunity to say a huge congratulations to our secondary pupils for their achievements and certificates this term — your efforts and results make us all incredibly proud.

Finally, thank you all for your continued support and here's to a fantastic year ahead at Five Acre Wood School!



Peggy

Creativity in the Community

FAW Artwork Brings Colour to Shepway

Five Acre Wood School was recently invited by local housing provider Golding Homes to create artwork for the hoarding surrounding their new development in the Cambridge Crescent area of Shepway, where 236 new high-quality, affordable, and energy-efficient homes are being built. Golding Homes, and project partner Skillcrown, wanted to involve the local community in the transformation of their area so they reached out to us to help add colour and vibrancy to the hoardings.



After pupils from Snodland had the opportunity to look around the Oxford Road site, pupils from both sites visited the Shepway hub on Northumberland Road to see their vibrant creations proudly displayed both inside and across the windows. The visit was filled with excitement as pupils eagerly spotted their own artwork, posed for photographs, and enjoyed a well-earned biscuit or two before taking a short walk to see their work officially unveiled — enlarged and displayed for all to enjoy on the hoarding boards surrounding the building site.

The colourful pieces, inspired by Romero Britto and Friedensreich Hundertwasser, centre around the themes of community, animals, love and sustainability.

Each design radiates positivity and creativity, transforming the



once plain hoarding boards into a joyful celebration of art and local spirit. Teacher Karine said: "Our students fully embraced the opportunity to take part in the art project to celebrate in bold colours and patterns the building of the new and exciting

housing development in our local community. The display looks absolutely amazing." Matt Arnold, Land and Development Director, Skillcrown added: "It's fantastic to see the students' creativity making such a positive impact in the heart of the Shepway community."

You can see this fantastic addition on Cambridge Crescent, just a stone's throw away from our Oxford Road site — a true testament to the talent of our students!



Transforming Spaces, Inspiring Futures

On 25th September, invited guests joined us to celebrate the launch of several pioneering projects at Five Acre Wood. The event began with inspiring speeches from staff, supporters, and pupils, followed by wonderful entertainment from our signing choir and Ellen Blane. Guests then enjoyed delicious catering from Grow 19 before touring the school to see the newly completed ventures in action.

Our new additions include:

The FAWbulous Bus – a double-decker soft play bus generously donated by Norman and the team at *Nu-Venture*, and brought to life through the support of trustees, fundraisers, and many others.

The 7FAW7 – a former Airbus A319 transformed into a fully accessible library, inspiring a love of reading. This visionary project, repurposing a fuselage to overcome spatial constraints, has created a cost-effective and imaginative space that enriches our school environment. Just as the aircraft once took people on journeys across Europe, it now takes our pupils on journeys of discovery.

The FAWtilus – once a freefall lifeboat, now a distinctive counselling space supporting mental health and wellbeing. Its playful, imaginative design makes counselling feel welcoming rather than intimidating, helping to break down barriers around seeking support.

Platform FAW – a hands-on learning space where pupils can master real-world production skills in coffee roasting. With guidance from Esther Hope-Gibbs of Hope Espresso, this inspiring enterprise has firmly established us as one of only two schools in Europe with a roastery.

The FAWtique – our luxury farm and school shop, offering a unique space for pupils to gain invaluable retail and customer service experience.

These projects have only been made possible through the generosity, creativity, and commitment of our entire community. Together, they are not just unique learning spaces but life-changing opportunities — ensuring our pupils develop the skills, confidence, and joy they deserve.

On behalf of everyone at Five Acre Wood: thank you.





Thank You

Aillio Ltd
Air Salvage International
Aviva Insurance
Cantiacorum Foundation
Cartier the Jeweller
Clive Lampard
Coffee Hit Ltd
Coffee World (UK) Ltd
Costa Coffee
David and Lynda SmithDavid Whittaker
Davies Turner
Fellow
Five Acre Wood School
Friends of Five Acre Wood and Grow 19
Funding for all
Green Coffee Collective
Gregg Wallace
Grounded Surfaces

Hope Espresso
Jackie Wilkins and Family
JEC Electrical Contractors
JEM Construction Ltd
JENCO Controls and Export Ltd
Kentish VW Club
Marc Cananur
Mocha Mondo Coffee
Nu-Venture
Optimize Steel
Persimmon Homes
Peter Laker
Peter and Rose Hill
Procter & Gamble
Restoring Homes Ltd
SEC Works
The ABC Book Club
The Bertha Chapter No 31 Freemason Lodge

The Binnewith Freemason Lodge
The Canterbury and District Welsh Society
The Coppice Pub
The Cobtree Trust
The Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons
Charity
The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons
The Jenkinson Family and The Three Peaks
Team
The Kent Community Foundation
The Mark Benevolent Fund
The Pentalpha Freemason Lodge
The Royal Military Freemason Lodge
The Three Peaks Team
The Queens Head
Twelve Electric
Vanquis
WallArt by Promote Your School

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

Celebrating Successes

At the beginning of October, we proudly hosted a wonderful evening celebrating the incredible achievements of our students from both our Snodland and Oxford Road sites. It was a lovely opportunity to recognise the hard work, perseverance, and progress of our students as they received certificates for the qualifications they achieved during the 2024–25 academic year.



This year, 107 students across the school undertook qualifications — collectively achieving an

outstanding 323 individual awards! These qualifications, varying from ASDAN awards, BTECs, and Functional Skills, reflect the diverse learning pathways we offer, designed to celebrate every individual's strengths, interests, and talents.

Our KS4 students achieved fantastic results through both the Formal Learning



Approach and the Practical Learning Approach. Our Post-16 learners also shone brightly, achieving success through the Functional Learning Approach and the Sensory Learning Approach.

We could not be prouder of every student for their hard work and resilience — and of the incredible progress made by all. Congratulations to every one of our certificate recipients for their achievements and continued commitment to learning. We look forward to seeing what they accomplish next!

Class Open Days

This term, our Loose site welcomed families into school for our Coffee Mornings and Stay and Play sessions. It was wonderful to see so many friendly faces filling the classrooms and corridors, with children proudly sharing their daily learning environment with their grown-ups. Families had the chance to join in with a variety of activities, play alongside their children, and spend time talking with staff. The sessions were filled with fun, laughter, and plenty of memorable moments—we hope everyone who joined us enjoyed the experience as much as we did!



Structured Art Gallery

Secondary Structured hosted their annual Art Gallery event, transforming a marquee into a vibrant exhibition space that perfectly captured the feel of a professional gallery.

After exploring various artists as part of their project-based learning, pupils created their own masterpieces. The results were nothing short of

inspiring — a true showcase of creativity, individuality, and skill. As well as creating stunning artwork, pupils designed their own invitations for the event, with Deen's invite being chosen as the winner. Well done to everyone involved for making it such a memorable and successful event!



NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

Outdoor Learning Environment

Our Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) at our Loose site is a vibrant space where pupils learn, explore, and thrive. The OLE brings together all aspects of outdoor learning and vocational skills, offering a wealth of opportunities for pupils to grow, connect with nature, and develop independence.

At its heart lies a thriving vegetable and fruit garden, surrounded by paths leading to different learning zones. Pupils plant, nurture, and harvest produce used in cooking lessons or sold through mini-enterprise projects. They can also pick apples and crush them in our apple press to make apple juice right under the very tree they picked the apples from. A nearby polytunnel allows horticulture sessions to continue whatever the weather, while our picket fenced herb and fruit garden is alive with colours, scents, and textures. The OLE is also home to rich wildlife areas, including a frog pond, bird hide and feeding station, and log piles for insects.

Recently, we have installed a willow dome which we hope to turn into a storytelling area, a hop pole, which we plan to grow Kent hops up, and our forest school area beneath our magnificent 150-year-old oak trees, where our local community of grey squirrels benefit from the acorns. Pupils have been busy planting native trees and hedging plants to create wildlife corridors and we already have a den of foxes with a mother and three cubs. These spaces encourage exploration, creativity, and calm — helping pupils manage anxiety and discover joy in learning outdoors.

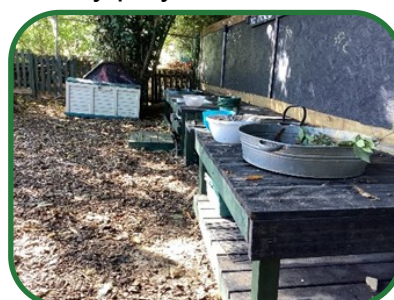
The OLE is cared for by our dedicated staff, pupils, and a small team of volunteers who give their time each week to help build and maintain this special space. Together, they create lasting memories and a truly transformative environment that nurtures confidence, wellbeing, and a lifelong love of nature.

FAWrest School

We have been very busy down in FAWrest school this term, enjoying seeing a multitude of classes exploring nature and learning through play, expressing our ethos of Freedom, Adventure and Wonder.



This term has also seen the completion of two brand new exciting areas, one being the mud kitchen and the second being a music zone. Our new mud kitchen was built by South East Water volunteers and is being thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils, enabling them to explore a variety of sensory mediums through messy play.



Our new music zone has

been created by OLE staff, using all repurposed and recycled materials that were destined for the skip or landfill, creating a space which can be enjoyed by the pupils whilst also being able to discuss the importance of sustainability and reducing waste.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

TEAM Family Support

The Family Support Team would like to offer a warm welcome to all our families, both new and returning. We have really enjoyed getting to know our new parents and carers, as well as catching up with familiar faces.

If you have not had the chance to see us around or speak with us this term, we are non classroom based staff who provide support and information to parents and carers. We work alongside outside agencies and professionals to offer a comprehensive service to our families. Please do feel free to pop in, email, or call for advice and support — we are always happy to help.

Next term, we will be hosting a coffee morning, giving parents and carers the opportunity to meet the specialist teams within school who work alongside teaching staff to support and enhance pupil's learning. Keep an eye out for the date and more details — we would love to see as many of you as possible!

Our Friday Tuck Shop has been a great success this term. Run by pupils, it offers valuable opportunities to develop communication, numeracy, and social skills as they serve snacks and sweet treats to their peers. The pupils love taking part (and sampling the treats too!), and all proceeds go towards supporting our school family food bank — thank you to everyone who has contributed to this great cause.

Pupil Spotlight

We are incredibly proud of William in Dahl Class! His passion for football shines both in and out of school. As well as enjoying games with his friends, William plays for a team in the Maidstone League and has recently been selected to join a team in the Junior Premier League (JPL). His dedication, teamwork, and determination are truly inspiring — well done William!



Radio FAW All

Since opening, the studio has been a lively hub of creativity. Pupils have been recording jingles, curating playlists, airing messages, and even trying their hand at live presenting. Edison Class especially loved experimenting with the voice changer and recording their own jingles!

We also held a community launch event this term where guests got to hear a mixture of clips from pupils who have been to the studio, a selection of Five Acre Wood's Signing Choir's songs, and had an introduction to the aims of our radio station.

A special thank you goes to Tad from Maidstone Community Support Centre for joining us to celebrate this milestone. We cannot wait for more fun next term—stay tuned!



FUNDRAISING

A huge welcome (or welcome back!) to the Five Acre Wood School community from the Fundraising Team.

You may have spotted that Tracey (also a receptionist at our Loose site) has recently joined the team to help support our fundraising efforts and she is already proving to be a fantastic addition.

As a state school, government funding covers our core costs such as buildings and staff salaries. However, the *extras* — the special experiences, facilities, and opportunities that make Five Acre Wood so extraordinary — rely on fundraising.

This academic year is set to be an inspiring one, with lots of new projects, events, and initiatives taking shape.

How you can get involved:

There are so many ways you can make a difference:

- Take on a personal challenge – run a marathon, climb a mountain, host a quiz night etc.
- Hold a dress-down day at work or school.
- Take part in our yearly challenge to raise money for Woodstock.
- Set up a monthly standing order.
- Take a donation box for your club, gym, or workplace.
- Register with EasyFundraising (choose *Friends of Five Acre Wood and Grow 19*)
- Leave a lasting legacy – remember us in your will.
- Donate raffle prizes or sponsor an event as a company.
- Volunteer your time or organise a corporate away day.

No matter how you choose to support us, we would love to hear from you so we can celebrate your kindness. You are always welcome to pop in for a chat about your ideas!

Fundraisers and projects:



On Sunday 26th October, Jag, our school counsellor, will be running the Dublin Marathon to raise funds for our newest project — the Five Acre Wood Play Therapy Bus!

“ Play is our brains favourite way of learning ”
Diane Ackerman

This innovative, mobile play therapy space will help meet the growing need for accessible mental health support across our school community. The converted vehicle — whether a minibus or caravan — will travel between FAW sites, bringing therapeutic resources directly to children who need them most.

This marathon marks the start of an exciting journey, and with your support, we hope to make this vision a reality. Please join us in sending Jag lots of good luck — we cannot wait to hear all about her adventure!

You can still donate and follow Jag's fundraising progress by scanning the QR code.



If every family donated £1 a month, we'd raise over £8,000 a year for our 800+ pupils.

The Core@FAW:

In partnership with Core the Gym, Maidstone, we are developing a specialist gym housed in a converted shipping container at our Oxford Road site.

This unique facility will:

- Offer tailored land-based training for pupils
- Provide a pathway to independence, wellbeing, and fitness-based employment opportunities.
- Promote physical health, confidence, and life skills through structured, accessible sessions.

If you would like to support or learn more, please contact us, or you can email Jay Atkins, Managing Director for Core the Gym (jay@corethegym.com)



You can also donate directly via our fundraising page:

A huge heartfelt thank you to Jay and his team at Core the Gym for their passion, drive, and incredible support with this project!

Coming Soon...

We have been working hard behind the scenes to develop our new charity website, along with a fresh logo and name. We cannot wait to reveal more in our next newsletter and on our social media platforms — watch this space!

Looking Ahead to Term 2:

Term 2 promises to be magical, with a line-up of festive favourites and exciting new events, including:

- Five Acre Wood Magical Grotto
- Sensory Pantomime with *Head2Head Sensory Theatre*
- Winter Fairs
- Christmas Crafts in the FAWrest

A huge thank you to everyone who has purchased tickets, joined in, or donated in kind this term — your support truly makes a difference.



We cannot wait to continue building on this success throughout the year. Please do contact us on fundraising@five-acre.kent.sch.uk with any feedback or fundraising ideas — we would love to hear from you.

Hannah, *Fundraiser*

EYFS Learning Approach

We are delighted to welcome you to another exciting year in EYFS! It promises to be full of wonder, discovery, and adventure, as the children dive into a wide range of themes and topics designed to inspire their natural curiosity, spark their imagination, and nurture a lifelong love of learning. Each term has been planned to create learning opportunities that encourage children to explore, experiment, and connect with the world around them.

Term 1 – Getting to Know You

This term, we have focused on building strong relationships and celebrating what makes each of us special. The children have been exploring their likes and motivators, expressing themselves through animation activities, and embracing the magic of autumn.

We have been jumping in crunchy leaves, feeling different textures, and discovering the season's colours and sounds. Through sensory play and outdoor learning, children have been encouraged to ask questions, explore freely, and develop their confidence in new spaces.

Term 3 – Understanding Our World

We will travel back in time to uncover the secrets of dinosaurs and fossils, digging, investigating, and making exciting discoveries. We will then leap into the present and future with robots and machines, encouraging children to tinker, build, and problem-solve. This topic is designed to ignite curiosity.

Term 5 – Animal Magic

This term will be packed with curious creatures and exciting habitats as we discover woodland and safari animals. Through storytelling, sensory exploration, and imaginative play, children will deepen their understanding of animals and their environments. This theme encourages children to ask questions and express themselves creatively.

Term 2 – Seasonal Sparks

Next term's theme, Seasonal Sparks, will light up our learning with celebrations of Spooksville, Diwali, and, of course, the Christmas festivities. We will be exploring light and dark, sounds and celebrations, and seasonal changes through creative, multisensory activities.

We will be hosting our EYFS Christmas Stay and Play with the OLE — a magical opportunity for children and families to explore together. Keep an eye out for more details!

Term 4 – The Great Outdoors

With spring on the way, we will explore life on the farm, learn about animal life cycles, and experience the rhythms of the changing seasons. The children will engage in hands-on, exploratory play, supporting their understanding of the world and living things.

Term 6 – Travel

We will round off the year with a truly exciting Travel topic. The children will be exploring different ways to travel through projects around trains, planes, and construction. This theme will be filled with role play, problem-solving, and imaginative journeys, helping children build their communication, collaboration, and independence skills.

We will continue to learn through hands-on experiences that encourage exploration with our senses, spending time in our outdoor environments, noticing seasonal changes, engaging in themed activities, and enjoying favourite books.

Events to look forward to...

Christmas Stay and Play – A festive and magical family learning event

Easter Event – A celebration full of seasonal wonder

Saplings Sports Day

EYFS Class Updates



Babe Class

Babe Class have had a fantastic first term! Everyone has settled in really well, and all of the children have enjoyed exploring their new indoor and outdoor areas, as well as other spaces around the school such as Saplings and Soft Play. Our favourite activities include food exploration, puzzles, and playdough. We are looking forward to even more fun next term!



Elsa Class

This term, we have been busy exploring our new classroom and getting to know each other. There are so many fabulous things to play with, both inside and in our outdoor area! We have been getting used to our daily routines, learning to use our schedules, and enjoying inclusion sessions with other classes.



At Saplings, we have loved climbing, exploring the natural environment, and taking part in the fantastic activities on offer. We even collected resources to bring back to our classroom to continue our learning. A highlight of the term was our Stay and Play session, where our parents joined us in class and saw us being curious and adventurous in the Saplings environment.



EYFS Class Updates

Flipper Class

In Flipper Class we have been exploring the changing colours of autumn through nature themed activities and some of our favourite animations. The children have really enjoyed learning through a mix of sensory play and activities that supported their fine motor skills. We have also been working on building meaningful relationships and turn taking with peers. Flipper Class have enjoyed discovering different areas of the school including, the big playground, the MUGA, the Sensory Garden and especially big soft play!



Hedwig Class

Hedwig Class have had an exciting and enriching term, filled with hands on learning and engaging experiences. Our topics this term have included animation, fall, and Halloween, which have sparked curiosity and creativity among the children. The class has settled in beautifully, with strong friendships blossoming and impressive cooperation developing during group activities and free play.



A highlight of the term has been our Forest School sessions, where pupils have explored the outdoors through sensory play and storytelling, particularly enjoying activities inspired by *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. These sessions have encouraged teamwork, communication, and a love for nature.

In the classroom, the children have been progressing well with their TEACCH rotations, making great use of visual aids to support their independence and understanding. It has been a joyful and productive term full of growth and discovery.



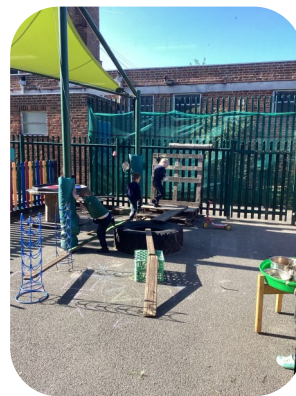
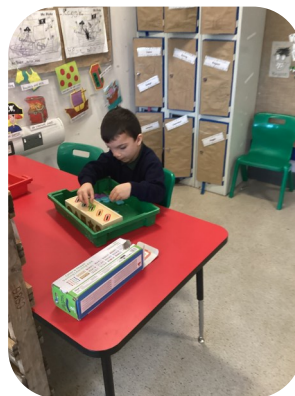
EYFS Class Updates

Koko Class

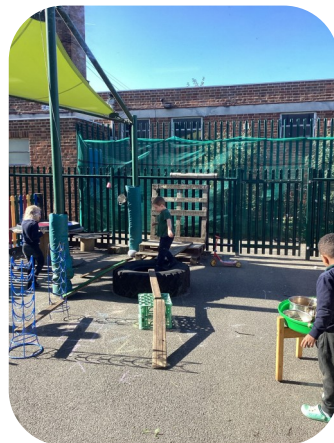
It has been a great start to the school year, with children joining us throughout the term. Koko Class have enjoyed getting to know new friends and exploring different areas of the school. They have been discovering new resources during group activities, interacting with peers in sensory play, and engaging with adult-led sessions for short periods of time.



Lassie Class



Lassie Class children are settling in well — forming new friendships, embracing daily routines, and eagerly exploring their classroom environment, as well as wider school spaces such as the field and soft play area. They have especially enjoyed the creative activities linked to our theme, 'All About Me', along with story time sessions and singing based on our weekly book. We are incredibly proud of how quickly the children have adapted and are excited for a year ahead filled with fun, curiosity, and creativity.



EYFS Class Updates

Marley Class

Marley Class have had an amazing start to the new school year! Everyone has settled well into the school routine and is enjoying daily activities — especially soft play and time in the sensory garden. Our topics this term have been 'Getting to Know You' and 'Autumn', with a focus on communication and social interaction. The children are beginning to build strong bonds within Marley Class and with peers from other classes during inclusion sessions.

We have had lots of messy play fun and have been developing our fine motor skills during workstation time, 1:1 sessions, and group activities. We are looking forward to next term, when we will be learning about Harvest, Winter, Diwali, and Christmas!



Skippy Class

Skippy Class have had a fantastic first term getting to know new friends and staff, and enjoying lots of opportunities to explore! The children have loved our 'Food Explorers' sessions, where we have been practising our cutting skills — starting with squashing, ripping, and tearing, before moving on to using safety knives to cut foods such as fruit, cooked vegetables, and cheese (we loved tasting them too!).

We have also enjoyed our new home corner, and the sensory swing and projector in our den have been a big hit. This term, we have explored soft play and worked really hard on our transitions — we are so proud of you, Skippy!



EYFS Class Updates

Thula Class



Thula Class have settled beautifully back into school life and have loved exploring their new classroom and outdoor area. The children have enjoyed a wide range of sensory play experiences, exploring different textures, colours, and smells through harvest-themed activities with vegetables and pumpkins.

Everyone has worked incredibly hard this term, and we are so proud of all they have achieved. We can't wait to see how their confidence and curiosity continue to grow next term as we move into our new topics and celebrations!



Toto Class

Toto Class has settled in amazingly this term, with lots of exploring and discovering new things. The pupils have shown great curiosity and excitement to learn, diving into every activity with enthusiasm. It has been wonderful to see them engage with their environment, and take on new challenges with confidence.

It has been wonderful to see the children forming new friendships, taking on challenges with confidence, and showing pride in their achievements. The staff are incredibly proud of how much progress everyone has made already, and we are looking forward to another term filled with fun, learning, and plenty of new adventures!



THANKS FOR READING



Parent/Carer Reminder:

In the interest of your child's health and safety, it is your responsibility to ensure all information on Healthcare Plans is kept up to date. As always, if you have any issues accessing any Apps, Portals or just need general assistance, please email office@five.acre.kent.sch.uk and someone will get back to you.