FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

Growing and Learning Together

NEWSLETTER

TERM 5 2026

Our Cover Stars:

Our Walking FAW Woodstock fundraisers

Inside this issue:

- FAWever Choir's Latest Single
- Preparing FAW Adulthood Hub
- Structured Primary Class Updates

Dates for your diary:

Monday 1st June —	First day of term 6
Friday 12th June —	Charity Football Match
Friday 26th June —	Summer Disco
w/c 22nd June —	Loose Sports Days
Monday 29th June —	Meet the new teacher parents evening
Friday 3rd July —	Transition Day
Tuesday 21st July —	Last Day of Term / Woodstock

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Peggy's Message

Welcome to our Term 5 Newsletter!

Although this has been a relatively short term, we have still managed to achieve and experience so much across the school community. This edition captures just some of the fantastic events, opportunities and achievements that have taken place over the past few weeks.

There have been a variety of exciting trips and experiences for our pupils, alongside wonderful performances from our choir, who have also been busy recording their next single — a huge well done to everyone involved. Our Structured Learning Approach pupils also enjoyed their annual school sleepover, creating lasting memories together. I want to say a personal thank you to the dedicated staff who generously gave up their time to make this special event possible.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many class activities and trips featured throughout this newsletter, while also learning more about our expanding facilities and the continued development of opportunities for our pupils. Exciting examples include our Preparing for Adulthood Hub and the third-floor expansion at our Loose site, both of which will further support growth, independence and learning opportunities for our young people. Many of these enriching experiences and new provisions would not have been possible without the incredible support of our school charity, community partnerships, and the generosity of so many amazing people and organisations. We are extremely grateful for their continued support and commitment to our school.

I always enjoy reading Matt's articles (turn to page 5), and it was especially lovely to welcome him back this term on a beautiful sunny day in May, where he joined our OLE team and got involved in one of their projects. We have also welcomed many volunteers to support our OLE provision this term and, with the recent sunshine, it has been wonderful to see these projects flourishing. It has been equally heartwarming to see our pupils volunteering their own time to help others and contribute positively to the community.

As we look ahead to next term, I am excited for our transition activities and the opportunity to welcome our new cohort of pupils and families into the school community. Preparations are also already underway for Woodstock, with our dedicated Woodstock Committee busy planning what promises to be another fantastic event.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support, and I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter.

Peggy

WALKING FAW WOODSTOCK

West Highland Way

Over the Easter break, a team of determined staff and supporters swapped the comfort of home for the rugged Scottish Highlands as they tackled the famous West Highland Way to raise money for our Woodstock festival. Covering an incredible 96 miles from Milngavie to Fort William in just five days, the group completed the challenge well ahead of the usual seven-day pace.

From peaceful woodland trails to steep and demanding terrain, the route tested the team every step of the way — with Storm Dave adding an extra layer of difficulty. Despite the conditions, spirits remained high as the walkers supported one another through the challenge.

Congratulations go to Tim, Rachael, Phil, Martyn, Lisa, Gayle, Amy, Charlie, Jo and Sarah, with invaluable support from Kim and Sarah. Their commitment went far beyond the walk itself, with months of preparation and training leading up to the event.

The challenge has already raised more than £8,700 for our Woodstock '26 festival through donations and sponsorship, with funds continuing to come in. As every participant covered the cost of their own place, all money raised will directly benefit our pupils and school community.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who donated, encouraged and sponsored the team, including South East Water, Humidity Response Ltd, JEM Construction, Mobile Pools UK Ltd, Superfast Labels Ltd, Mindflick, KMTV and Costa Coffee.

"Completing this challenge together was an unforgettable experience and I could not be prouder of the team and the determination, care and togetherness they showed every single day. I'm also immensely grateful to all of our sponsors and supporters, whose generosity made the challenge possible and will help provide extraordinary opportunities for our pupils. Together, we're proving that when people unite behind a shared purpose, amazing things can happen." - *Tim Williams, Headteacher*

To make the achievement even more memorable, KMTV followed the team's journey and is producing a documentary that will share the story behind the challenge, the people involved and the impact the fundraising will have.

An incredible accomplishment and a fantastic example of determination, teamwork and community spirit.

New Single Incoming:

Hoping to 'Climb' the Charts Once Again

Our School FAWever Choir are preparing to release their sixth single on our very own record label, Five Acre Wood Records — and this could be our biggest release yet.

We are proud to present a powerful cover of *"The Climb"* by Miley Cyrus, featuring our special guest and friend Rachel Francis, who previously performed at our much-loved Woodstock Festival.

This inspiring song is all about perseverance, self-belief and overcoming obstacles — a message that perfectly reflects the spirit of our pupils and wider school community. What makes this recording even more special is its honesty and authenticity. There is no autotune and no overdubbed backing vocals. What you hear are our pupils' real voices — authentic, unfiltered and celebrated exactly as they are. Every lyric carries genuine emotion, courage and joy, making this far more than just a song.

Recorded and filmed at the Cornwallis Suite in Maidstone and the Loose site of Five Acre Wood School, the project captures something truly special: the power of music to bring people together and give every voice the opportunity to shine.

The single will be available on all major streaming and download platforms from 19th June 2026.

The vocals were first premiered at the prestigious Kipp Popert World Golf Invitational on 11th May 2026, with the official music video receiving its premiere at South East Water HQ on 12th May 2026. The single will be released worldwide on Friday 19th June 2026 — perfectly timed ahead of Father's Day on Sunday 21st June.

A huge thank you goes to the brilliant team who helped bring this project to life: Lee Rose, DeeVu Records, Kevin Thorpe, Mark Doggett and Big Jam Productions. Their creativity, expertise and unwavering support have helped create an unforgettable platform for our pupils. We are also incredibly grateful to the wonderfully talented Rachel for collaborating with us on this track.

If you would like to support the release, we would especially love for you to purchase the single on iTunes for just 99p as we attempt to secure another official iTunes chart position for our pupils. Every download genuinely makes a difference.

Please listen, download, like and share — and help us take *The Climb* all the way to Number 1!

A WARM WELCOME TO EARLY SUMMER

I recently caught up with Matt during another of his volunteer days, where he was helping to build the new FAWrest School Lodge — a space that will offer our young people a chance to pause, connect with nature, regulate and simply be; something that makes Matt happy.

Michelle Aslett, Communications Officer

As we move from spring to summer, it feels like a time for growth, change and preparation for new beginnings. For many of you, the summer term can bring excitement as well as uncertainty. It often marks the closing of one chapter and the beginning of another, with thoughts naturally turning towards new classes, new routines and new experiences in the next school year.

Transitions can bring both excitement and uncertainty, especially when routines and familiar faces change, but with the right support they can also be positive opportunities to grow in confidence and independence.

Over recent months, I have also been navigating a new role professionally, which has reminded me just how important a few simple principles can be during times of change, and I wanted to share these with you:

1. Keep routines in place - Routine provides comfort, structure and predictability. While some adjustments may be needed, keeping familiar patterns wherever possible can help you feel safe and secure.

2. Lean on support networks - Please remember that you are not alone. Teachers, pastoral teams and fellow parents are all here to support one another. Asking questions, seeking reassurance, and sharing concerns is always encouraged.

3. Communicate openly - Open communication is key. Sharing worries helps everyone work together to provide the best possible support needed.

4. Celebrate individuality - Everyone's journey is unique. Feel proud of who you are and the progress you have already made, while looking forward to the opportunities ahead.

5. Prioritise wellbeing - Making time for the activities, interests and quiet moments that help you feel calm and regulated is so important, especially during periods of change.

As we look ahead, there is much to look forward to — new learning opportunities, memorable experiences, and the chance to prepare positively for the next stage of your journey.

This month is a particularly busy time for me, travelling around the country for work and celebrating my birthday, but I will be following the steps above to help me stay on track as I, like you, continue my own transition.

I took this photograph a few weeks back while taking some time out to regulate myself. I captured this sunrise on the lake and realised right then how important these quiet moments are and what makes me happy. What is it that makes you feel happy?

See you next term,

Matt

PREPARING FAW ADULTHOOD HUB

Our Preparing for Adulthood Hub continues to grow from strength to strength, offering pupils across all sites a wide range of opportunities to develop practical, transferable life skills in engaging and meaningful environments. The hub brings together several specialist areas designed to help learners build confidence, independence and communication skills, while preparing them for future education, employment and community opportunities.

At the FAWrient Express and Platform FAW Roastery, pupils are involved in the full coffee-making process, from roasting and bagging coffee beans to serving customers in the café environment. Through this, learners develop valuable hospitality and teamwork skills, while also practising communication, money handling and customer service in a real-life setting.

Our school shop, Peggy's FAWtique, provides another opportunity for pupils to gain experience in retail and customer interaction. Students help organise stock, prepare products for sale and support customers, learning important workplace skills such as responsibility, organisation and problem solving. It currently stocks some great products including our picnic cooler backpack—perfect for summer.

Pupils have been engaging in horticulture activities within the polytunnels, which are currently looking wonderfully green and full of life. Students have been caring for tomato plants and courgettes, while also preparing colourful flowers and herbs that will be transformed into hanging baskets and seasonal displays later in the year. Many of these products will eventually be sold through Peggy's FAWtique, allowing pupils to see projects through from growth and production to sale. Outdoor learning also provides opportunities to develop wider vocational skills, including building, carpentry and teamwork projects.

Our newest addition, Made FAW You, is an exciting catering kitchen where pupils will begin developing cooking, food preparation and kitchen safety skills. During the final week of term, members of the Costa team visited pupils in the new space, which was generously funded by the Costa Foundation. You can read more about this new provision later on in the newsletter, along with exciting plans for a pop-up event to take place in Maidstone at the beginning of next term.

Looking ahead, another exciting development will be The Art of FAW, a dedicated art gallery space that will celebrate pupils' creativity and artistic talents. The space will provide opportunities for workshops, exhibitions and showcasing artwork created by learners across the school. Importantly, all of the Preparing for Adulthood facilities are used by pupils from every site within the school. While the hub plays a vital role in supporting our older students as they prepare for adulthood and future pathways, younger pupils also benefit greatly from accessing these environments. For many learners, visiting the facilities helps develop independence and confidence as they practise safely transitioning from their classrooms to different areas around the school grounds.

The Preparing for Adulthood Hub continues to provide meaningful experiences that help pupils develop essential life skills in supportive and inspiring environments.

An update from our Designated Teacher for LAC

As part of my role supporting our Looked After Children, I regularly attend local authority network meetings to ensure we remain up to date with current guidance, local developments and best practice.

Last month, I attended the Medway network meeting for Designated Teachers supporting Looked After Children (LAC), where professionals from across the area came together to share updates, best practice and ways to improve outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners.

One of the key topics discussed was the upcoming local government reforms. By April 2028, Kent and Medway are expected to undergo significant reorganisation, with Medway's services likely merging into a larger North Kent unitary authority. While plans are still evolving, these changes are intended to support the creation of a Kent and Medway Combined Authority, alongside an elected Mayor, helping to bring more decision-making powers closer to local communities.

Another key topic was the importance of stability, consistency and carefully planned transitions for children who are looked after and for pupils with special educational needs. For many young people who have already experienced significant change or loss, moving between classes, schools or services can feel particularly unsettling, so thoughtful transition planning remains essential in helping them feel safe, supported and ready to learn.

We also discussed the work being undertaken by Medway Virtual School to develop improved ways of capturing the pupil voice, ensuring that children and young people from a wide range of backgrounds are listened to and involved in decisions that affect them.

In addition, there was wider discussion around the increasing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. Alongside the benefits that new technology can bring, it was interesting to consider some of the environmental impacts associated with AI and digital services, reminding us all of the importance of using technology thoughtfully and responsibly. I was surprised to learn just how much water is required to cool the data centres that power AI and instant access to information — reportedly up to 22,000 cubic metres of potable water each day.

Meetings such as these are invaluable in helping us stay informed, reflect on best practice and continue strengthening the support we provide for pupils across our school community. To find out more about the proposed local government reorganisation, you can watch the Medway Council video online.

Debbie Pardey, Designated Lead for LAC

EYFS Explore and Play Boxes

New 'Explore and Play Boxes' containing a range of engaging resources and guidance to help use the activities that focus on key areas such as communication, problem solving, fine motor skills, and independence are available for our EYFS classes to take home and borrow. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the EYFS team.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

Secondary Structured Sleepover

Secondary Structured hosted their annual sleepover this term, with 22 pupils taking part in a fantastic overnight stay at school.

The evening began with pupils exploring Saplings, where they enjoyed a range of sensory and settling activities. Just after 8pm, everyone made their way to the FAWrest School area and gathered around the newly developed fire pit to listen to music, sing songs, and enjoy delicious toasted marshmallows.

Later in the evening, pupils relaxed at our outdoor cinema, enjoying popcorn while watching a film together. Once the film had finished, it was time to settle down for the night. Everyone returned to FAWrest School, where pupils made themselves comfortable in their tents for a night's sleep — some settling more quickly than others!

The event was a huge success, and we are incredibly proud of all the pupils who took part. A huge thank you goes to all the staff who supported throughout the evening and helped make the experience so special. We already cannot wait for next year!

Radio FAW All

With Eurovision taking place recently, Edison Class thought it was the perfect opportunity to produce their very own Eurovision-themed radio show for Radio FAW All. The show featured a very special guest appearance from Cheryl Baker of Bucks Fizz fame, who was interviewed by pupils at the end of April. Students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and showed fantastic confidence and enthusiasm throughout the interview.

Oxford Road student Eddie has also been working hard as part of his work placement, producing an advert for the upcoming charity football match which has now been broadcast on the station.

Meanwhile, Jag and Adina from the Emotional Wellbeing Team recently recorded their latest wellbeing podcast focusing on interoception — our body's ability to sense, interpret and respond to internal signals, helping us understand how we feel both physically and emotionally. The podcast has already been broadcast and will continue to be played regularly, including on the last day of term at 4pm.

Radio FAW All continues to strengthen its links with the local community and has recently represented the school at a range of events, including the Maidstone Inter Faith Network event at County Hall, the "Meet the Players" event at Maidstone United F.C. and the Charities Connect event organised by FAWfilling Futures.

Paul and Clive have also visited Snodland to support learners with their Digital Media BTEC project and worked alongside Grow 19 students to help them produce their own radio show, where they introduced and discussed some of their favourite songs.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

Card Competition

We would like to say a huge thank you to Michael A Lawrence Funeral Directors for kindly running a special Parent & Carer Card Competition for our pupils.

Children across the school had the opportunity to design thoughtful and creative cards to celebrate the important parents and carers in their lives. We were incredibly impressed by the imagination, colour, and care shown in all of the entries.

The winning children were delighted to receive certificates and special prizes in recognition of their fantastic work. It was wonderful to celebrate their creativity and achievements together.

We are extremely grateful to Michael A Lawrence Funeral Directors for supporting our school community and providing such a meaningful opportunity for our pupils. Partnerships with local businesses help create memorable experiences for our children and are greatly appreciated by everyone at school. Congratulations once again to all of our winners and everyone who took part!

Water Sports Trip

Our Public Services and Sports BTEC students recently attended a watersports session at Mote Park as part of their coursework. Recent learning has focused on teamwork, leadership and the skills needed to work effectively both independently and as part of a team within sport and the public sector.

Students had the opportunity to choose between paddleboarding, kayaking and pedalos. Despite mixed weather conditions, everyone had a fantastic time and there were smiles all round, with many students already asking when they can go again!

Pupil Spotlight: Steven's Journey with Barney

Steven started at the end of last term feeling very scared of dogs and was unable to walk into reception knowing Barney was there. This term, Steven has shown amazing progress — he has stroked Barney and even taken him on daily walks. We are very proud of his achievements and the confidence he has built!

FORMAL SECONDARY UPDATES

English

It has been a busy and productive term in English, with students across all year groups engaging in a wide range of exciting and thought-provoking learning opportunities.

Year 10 and 11 students have been working extremely hard towards their Functional Skills qualifications in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. They have shown great commitment and resilience as they continue to develop these essential skills.

As part of their studies, Year 10 students have been exploring non-fiction texts and topics, including learning about different animals. This led to thoughtful discussions surrounding fox hunting, where students were encouraged to express their opinions while considering alternative viewpoints. Many discovered that the issue was more complex than they first thought, particularly when reflecting on ethical, environmental, and cultural perspectives.

Meanwhile, Year 11 students have been studying *Stone Cold* by Robert Swindells. This powerful novel, which follows the experiences of a young man facing homelessness, has provided valuable opportunities to explore important PSHE themes. Students have engaged in meaningful discussions about the causes of homelessness, as well as the support systems and charities available to help those in need. This has been an excellent way to develop empathy and awareness of real-world issues alongside their literacy skills.

Year 8 students have been enjoying a unit focused on inspirational figures. They have been learning about individuals such as Stephen Hawking, Helen Keller, Ellie Simmonds, and Louis Braille. Through reading biographies and exploring their achievements, students have reflected on how these individuals overcame challenges and did not allow their disabilities to limit their success. This has been a truly inspiring topic, encouraging students to think about resilience, determination, and ambition.

Year 9 students have had a fantastic term exploring the magical world of Harry Potter. They examined both book and film extracts and even completed their own creative applications to attend the “Hogwarts of 2026.” This work was enriched through links with Drama, where students explored how stories such as *Harry Potter* are adapted from page to screen. They gained an appreciation for the teamwork involved in filmmaking.

To bring this learning to life, students had the exciting opportunity to visit the Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – The Making of Harry Potter. This experience allowed them to see firsthand the creativity and effort that go into producing a major film. It was a memorable and inspiring trip that students thoroughly enjoyed. Here are some of the things they had to say:

“I really enjoyed the Harry Potter trip. I also really enjoyed seeing the movies come to life and the dragon breathing fire. I also enjoyed seeing all the props and flying on a broomstick.”

“Harry Potter World was so fun. We saw loads of props and green screens. Especially when you first walk in and the dragon is hanging from the ceiling. It was a great experience. I enjoyed seeing the prosthetics where the cast gets their hair and makeup done.”

“The Harry Potter trip was amazing — more like phenomenal! If I could go every week, I would. The best part was when we got to the main hall and the bank where you could see every detail on every prop. The masks were amazing also!”

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FORMAL SECONDARY UPDATES

Maths

It has been another busy and successful term in Maths, with pupils continuing to work hard towards their Functional Skills qualifications. We are incredibly proud of the determination, resilience and positive attitudes shown in lessons each day.

Congratulations to our Year 10 and 11 students who have achieved Entry Level Functional Skills Maths qualifications, and to our Year 11 students who recently passed Functional Skills Level 1 Maths — a fantastic achievement.

A special thank you also goes to our Maths Mentors, who continue to support younger pupils during lessons and set an excellent example to others.

We are also looking forward to celebrating National Numeracy Day and taking part in the Number Heroes drawing competition, where this year's theme is *Maths in the Community*. Our pupils have won the competition twice before, so we are excited to see this year's entries! If any families or members of the wider community would like to get involved, more information can be found here: National Numeracy Day

ICT

This term, students across the school have been developing a wide range of ICT skills. Year 9 students have been using spreadsheets to calculate shopping bills, while Year 8 have been improving their touch typing skills and learning about creating safe and secure passwords.

Key Stage 4 students have been working hard on the new ICT Digital Media qualification, building plans and using presentation skills while exploring music production using Cubase in our revamped ICT suite. Students have also enjoyed visits to and from the team at Radio FAWAll, creating jingles and content for the local community radio station. A huge thank you to Paul and Clive for all of their continued support.

Science

Science lessons this term have included a great mix of topics including pollution and upcycling, weather studies, space and the planets. Practical learning continues to play an important part in lessons, helping students develop teamwork and investigation skills.

Last terms activities included Year 9 students creating models of blood using food colouring, cereals and marshmallows, Year 10 flower dissections and students designing and building their own weather measuring instruments.

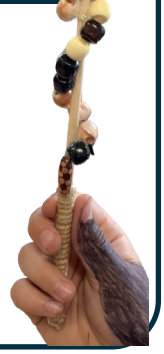
Humanities

Humanities lessons have remained practical, engaging and linked to everyday life. Year 10 students have been learning about public transport in London and studying Wales, while Year 9 have focused on local area topics. Year 11 students have been developing independence through planning trips and journeys. Through these activities, students continue to build their understanding of the world around them and their role within the local community.

FORMAL SECONDARY UPDATES

Creative Arts

Year 9 students have been exploring their topic *Literacy Comes to Life* through both Drama and English lessons. Towards the end of term, students enjoyed a trip to the Harry Potter Warner Bros. Studios, where they explored the sets, props and costumes used in the films. Back in class, they continued their learning through scene work, special effects and prop making activities.



Year 11 Arts Award students have been working on their Skill Share Projects as part of their Bronze Arts Award qualification. Students planned and delivered creative sessions for other pupils, teaching skills including drawing techniques, drumming, dance and choir. We are incredibly proud of the confidence, communication and leadership skills students have developed throughout the project.

Hawking Class

Hawking Class have been busy working towards Functional Skills Maths and English qualifications, alongside building portfolios for ICT Digital Media BTEC and Bronze Awards. As Year 11 approaches, students are beginning to think about their Post-16 options while continuing to enjoy all aspects of school life.

Some students have also taken on mentoring roles in IST, Science and PE, supporting Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils. They have represented the class brilliantly and enjoyed developing their confidence and leadership skills.

As always, we continue to focus on being a kind, caring and resilient class, building independence through our daily form time sessions. We also celebrated success at the recent Golf Day at London Golf Club, where the winning student came from Hawking Class!

Shakespeare Class

Students in Shakespeare Class have enjoyed a varied and active year, including trips to Harry Potter Studios, the cinema and Kent County Showground. Several students have also tried golf for the first time, while others have taken on the challenge of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, recently completing their first practice walk.

Students have continued to make excellent academic progress, with all pupils achieving a Functional Skills qualification in English, Maths or both. Many students have also developed their confidence and personal talents through events such as the school talent show.

Preparing for Adulthood lessons have remained a highlight, with students working at the FAWrient Express café, taking part in cooking lessons and supporting community projects around the school. Students also raised money for their end-of-year trip to Gravity by running a car wash fundraiser. It has been wonderful to see students continue to mature into confident, polite and helpful young adults.

FAWfilling Futures

It may have been a short term, but it has certainly been a busy one. Here's a little look at what we've been up to and the amazing support we have received across our school community.

Individual Fundraising

A huge congratulations and thank you to one of our amazing parents, Candis, who recently climbed Snowdon in support of Five Acre Wood School. Despite the weather originally being forecast for rain and fog, the team were incredibly lucky and had a fantastic day taking on the challenge. Thanks to the incredible generosity and support from family, friends, and the wider community, they have already raised an amazing £2,255.

The fundraising doesn't stop there either, as Candis' husband will also be taking on the incredible challenge of completing the Three Peaks in 24 hours on 19th June — we can't wait to hear how he gets on in the next newsletter.
We are so grateful for their incredible support and determination. Every penny raised will help support our inspiring plans to transform our current sensory garden into something truly special — the FAW Seasons Garden.
If you would like to donate please visit : [Matt Peal is fundraising for FAWfilling Futures – Five Acre Wood School]

Partnerships and Volunteering

This term, students from Oxford Road were lucky to take part in a fantastic volunteering day alongside Mentalkhealth, Sittingbourne and Gallagher Insurance, following a connection made through our school charity.

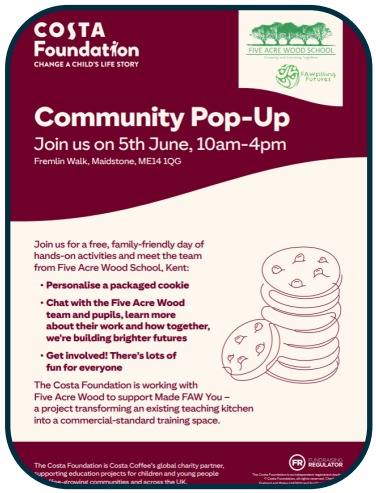
Students enjoyed a range of outdoor team-building activities, providing a wonderful opportunity to build confidence, develop new skills and spend time outdoors while supporting positive wellbeing and mental health.

Gallagher have played a huge role in fundraising for our school gym, so it was lovely to strengthen these connections and give something back. We are also incredibly proud to share that our Oxford Road students will be taking part in even more volunteering opportunities next term.

Donate Today

Amazon Wish List: Did you know that you can support our pupils by purchasing items from our Amazon Wish Lists, which are tailored to our different learning approaches across the school? Every donation helps provide valuable resources and enriching experiences that make a real difference to our pupils' learning and development. You can view our wish lists here: www.fawfillingfutures.co.uk

Made FAW You



We are proud to share the exciting launch of our newest project, “Made FAW You”, made possible thanks to the generous support of The Costa Foundation alongside contributions from JEM Construction, Hobart, Synecore, Vision and Williams. Thanks to these incredible partnerships, we have been able to transform our existing teaching kitchen into a fully equipped commercial kitchen, supporting the launch of our brand-new on-site school shop, “Peggy’s FAWtique”.

The kitchen will provide pupils with real-world learning experiences in a supported environment, allowing them to prepare and sell goods they have produced while developing food service and employability skills for the catering sector. Working alongside experienced industry specialists, pupils will gain hands-on experience that builds confidence, independence and workplace competencies to support future employment opportunities and everyday life skills.

During the final few weeks of term, pupils began using the kitchen and developing their culinary skills by making delicious Viennese whirls and sausage rolls — with fantastic results. We also had the pleasure of welcoming members of the Costa team into school to see the kitchen in action and sample some of the amazing treats our pupils had created. The team also brought along their media crew, so watch this space for even more exciting updates to come.

Next term, we are incredibly excited to be collaborating with Costa and The Costa Foundation on a special pop-up event in the centre of Maidstone, where pupils will have the opportunity to showcase their products within the local community. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to every organisation involved for believing in this project and helping bring it to life. Their generosity and support have already created incredible opportunities for our pupils, and we cannot wait to see the project continue to grow.

Costa Volunteering Day

It was lovely to welcome our friends from Costa Coffee’s Store Development & Maintenance Team back to School recently. With team members travelling from across the UK, and some even flying in, they had already gone the “extra acre” before the day had even begun.

Following their team meeting, the Costa team rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into a hands-on project within our Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE), helping to build our brand-new “FAWrest Lodge”. This fantastic new space will support our FAWrest School provision for older students, providing storage, an all-weather shelter, and a base to complement our outdoor kitchen.

The project came with a tight deadline, as we had just four weeks to transform the area in time for our first overnight camping experience with students. Thanks to the incredible teamwork and support from Costa volunteers, Andrew Barber and Matthew Barnicoat, the lodge and outdoor kitchen are now complete and ready to use.

Huge thanks must also go to our OLE team for all their hard work preparing the space and supporting the project. We are also incredibly grateful to Cordery Build Ltd for generously donating the paint and brushes needed to complete the lodge in its beautiful forest green colour.

South East Water Volunteering

We recently welcomed our friends from South East Water for a volunteering event; and what an incredible difference they made. The team worked tirelessly to completely transform one of our outdoor classrooms into a brand-new space where students can reconnect with nature.

As it was World Therapeutic Horticulture Day, the morning began with some propagation activities. The team learnt about willow propagation, taking cuttings that will eventually become part of a boundary hedge line within our FAWrest School area. Across two days, the volunteers cleared debris and old furniture, removed trees, bushes, and weeds, built fences and a new gate, painted the space and even created a giant sandpit.

We are so grateful for the time and enthusiasm shown by the South East Water team. Their support will make a lasting difference to our students and school community.

Summer disco

We are excited to invite families to join us at our Loose site for an evening of music, dancing, and fun on Friday 26th June. Your child's teacher will let you know which time slot their class has been allocated (from 5:30pm-7:45pm). Entry is £5 per family and booking slips are on their way home. There will also be drinks, sweet treats, and other goodies available to purchase on the night, so don't forget to bring some pennies along! We can't wait to see you there!

FAW Charity Football Match

Our fantastic FAW team will take to the pitch against the brilliant staff and volunteers from Maidstone United FC and Stones in the Community for an evening of football, fundraising and community spirit. The event will take place on Friday 12th June, with kick-off at 7pm. Alongside the match itself, there will be refreshments, face painting, raffle prizes and the chance to meet Iggy the Dinosaur, Maidstone United FC's mascot.

Most importantly, the event will help raise valuable funds to support our football sessions. These sessions provide our pupils with opportunities to develop teamwork, communication, confidence, movement, and many other important skills through fun and inclusive activities.

We would like to say a huge thank you in advance to everyone involved in supporting the event — from players, volunteers, sponsors and supporters to families and everyone helping behind the scenes. We look forward to sharing all the highlights, photos, and fundraising totals, as well as celebrating our incredible sponsors in next term's newsletter. Come on Team FAW!

Charities Connect

We recently held our very first Charities Connect evening aboard the Kentish Lady in Maidstone. A huge thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event. It was a really lovely evening and a fantastic opportunity to connect, share ideas and strengthen partnerships across our local community.

The event was organised by FAWfilling Futures alongside Stones in the Community, and it was wonderful to see so many charities coming together to collaborate and support one another; it provided a great opportunity to celebrate the power of community partnerships and the positive impact we can create by working together. We look forward to building on these exciting new connections in the future.

Hannah, *Philanthropy and Events Officer*

Structured Primary Class Updates

Beethoven Class

This term, pupils in Beethoven Class have been developing their independence and taking part in activities designed to support a range of important life skills. They have become increasingly confident at following classroom schedules and routines and have demonstrated fantastic skills when carrying out everyday tasks such as washing up, tidying litter, and preparing food.

Pupils have also been learning about personal care and hygiene routines. Through fun sensory activities using toothpaste and shaving foam, they practised cleaning “toothy smiles” and followed visual instructions for effective handwashing. The children have also explored the difference between wants and needs and developed their understanding of caring for others through nurturing and caring for baby dolls.

We are incredibly proud of the progress and independence shown by all pupils this term.

Brahms Class

Brahms Class have had a fantastic term focusing on Personal Development and independence. Pupils have explored how their bodies change as they grow older, discussing changes they have already noticed and those they may experience in the future.

The class has also been developing important independence skills by practising tasks such as packing their own bags, choosing appropriate clothing for different activities and weather, and learning how they can help around the home.

In cooking sessions, pupils have been developing their ability to read and follow recipes independently. A particular favourite this term was making banana sushi, where pupils carefully prepared bananas, rolled them in chocolate spread, and added colourful sprinkles.
We are very proud of the confidence, maturity, and enthusiasm pupils have shown throughout the term.

Structured Primary Class Updates

Britten Class

Britten Class have had lots of fun with their learning this term. They really loved exploring the FAWbulous Bus for the first time and having fun on the field.

Some children have been working on their road crossing skills, and we are so proud of them. We planted cress seeds and enjoyed watching them grow, then took the cress home to eat. Well done Britten Class, keep up the hard work!

Dun Class

This term, Dun Class have been developing their creativity and exploring a wide range of arts and crafts activities. It has been wonderful to see the children's curiosity and confidence grow as they experimented with different forms of mark making and creative expression.

Pupils have also enjoyed spending time with Barney the dog during daily walks, helping them to build confidence around dogs and small animals while learning about the importance of connection and care for animals.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and bravery shown by all pupils throughout the term.

Elgar Class

This term, pupils have enjoyed taking part in football sessions with Stones in the Community, developing their teamwork and confidence. They have also loved exploring a new outdoor area- The soft play bus, embracing new experiences and opportunities for play, this has been a particular highlight, which provided lots of excitement and active fun for everyone.

In class, we have been encouraging reading at home by sending reading books fortnightly. Pupils have been working hard on their comprehension skills, as well as developing their understanding of division in maths. In science, they have been learning all about life cycles and have shown great curiosity and engagement.

Structured Primary Class Updates

Chopin Class

What a fantastic and busy Term 5 it has been. This term, learning has been inspired by the fascinating themes of life cycles in planta and animals, alongside exploring our wider community.

Pupils became young scientists and gardeners as they planted flowers and sowed seeds, carefully observing every stage of growth. The children have shown incredible responsibility and care, checking their plants daily and watering them to help them thrive. Each child is also growing their own flower to take home, developing patience, curiosity, and a wonderful sense of achievement as they watch life grow before their eyes.

Our learning about the wider community has also taken us on a very exciting journey as we accessed the FAWrient Express. Here, the children have been developing essential life skills such as communication, requesting, turn-taking, money awareness, and social interaction, all within a fun and meaningful real-life context. It has been wonderful to see confidence grow as children enjoy ordering, and engaging with peers and adults in a café-style environment.

Across all our activities, Chopin Class have demonstrated outstanding skills in observation, independence, teamwork, fine motor development, and engagement with the world around them.

Structured Primary Class Updates

Debussy Class

Over this term, Debussy Class have been focusing on road safety and developing the skills needed to become active members of the community.

Pupils have worked incredibly hard to develop their awareness and make safe, responsible decisions when crossing roads. Everyone in Debussy Class should be extremely proud of the progress they have made.

The Debussy Class team are so proud of all our pupils for their hard work, confidence, and achievements throughout the term.

Handel Class

This term, pupils have enjoyed taking part in football sessions with Stones in the Community, developing their teamwork, confidence, and physical skills.

They have also loved exploring a new outdoor area and visiting the soft play bus, embracing new experiences and opportunities for active play. This has been a particular highlight of the term and brought lots of excitement.

In class, pupils have been encouraged to continue reading at home through fortnightly reading books. They have worked hard on their comprehension skills while also developing their understanding of division in maths. In science, pupils have been learning all about life cycles and have shown great curiosity and engagement throughout the topic.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and effort shown by all pupils this term.

Gershwin Class

Gershwin Class have had a busy and wonderful term exploring their topic, *Food Glorious Food!* Pupils enjoyed learning about the different ways we can keep ourselves healthy and clean while developing important independence and self-care skills.

Throughout the term, pupils prepared a range of healthy snacks, including delicious fruit salads, while practising handwashing, the safe use of knives, and cleaning up after themselves.

As part of their topic work, the class explored the plant life cycle and learned more about where our food comes from. This included planting and watering seeds, reading stories, and completing a variety of activities linked to plant growth and healthy eating.

Some of the class's favourite activities this term included mark making using unconventional materials and exploring self-care through outdoor washing activities. Pupils have also thoroughly enjoyed visits to the soft play bus and Trim Trail.

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.