



# PRIORY COMMON SCHOOL



## SUMMER 1 NEWSLETTER 2026

We take **Pride**, we **Care**, we are **Successful**

### Message from Head of School

Dear Priory Common School Community,

What a privilege it is to reflect on the past half term at Priory Common. Time really does fly—it only feels like yesterday we were welcoming our Reception pupils into our Priory Common family, and here we are, preparing to do it all over again for our next cohort. It's a wonderful reminder of the cycles of school life and the joy of new beginnings.

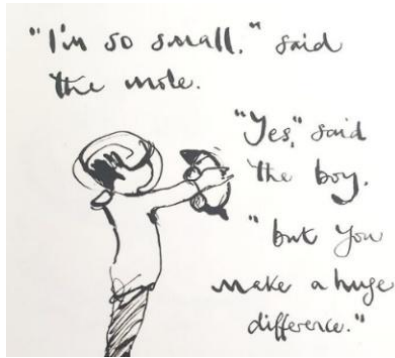


Despite being short, this half term has been wonderfully busy. Our pupils have had two truly amazing experiences that have enriched their personal development in meaningful ways. We were delighted to welcome a theatre company who brought Pinocchio to life for our pupils, and we also enjoyed a special performance from Toscana Strings. They performed The Wind in the Willows for our mainstream pupils and thoughtfully adapted their offering to perform The Tortoise and the Hare for our pupils in The Oak, ensuring everyone could enjoy and engage with the experience.

I'd like to take a moment to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our Spring Term questionnaire. Your feedback is invaluable to us. It was truly lovely to hear that 100% of you shared that your child feels safe at school. This is at the heart of everything we do. It was equally encouraging to learn that all pupils with SEND are given the support they need to succeed. These results are a testament to the dedicated work our staff have put in to ensure that every single pupil feels a genuine sense of belonging to Priory Common, where they can take Pride, Care and be Successful.

We were also pleased that 78% of you felt the school communicates well about things you need to know, taking into account the school website and our half termly newsletters. However, we recognise that this means 22% of you either didn't know or disagreed with this statement, and we'd genuinely love to hear from you. Your feedback matters. What more would you like to see or receive in relation to communication? Whether it's the frequency, format, or content of our updates, we want to make sure we're keeping you informed in the way that works best for your family. [Please click here to share your views](#)—your voice helps us improve.

As we move forward into the next half term, we remain committed to creating an environment where every pupil thrives, feels valued, and knows they belong. We have another action packed half term planned, so please do make a note of the calendar dates at the end of this newsletter.



Warmest regards,

Gill Cash

Head of School

## Safeguarding

### Keeping children safe online at Priory Common School

At Priory Common School safeguarding is one of the most important responsibilities we hold, which also means safeguarding our pupils in the online world. As you know, children now use the internet for multiple activities including learning, creativity, and collaboration, but with that, there are also potential risks we need to guard against.

The Department for Education states that schools and colleges have a statutory duty to keep children safe both on and offline and that we should ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring is in place in our school. Priory Common School works with the specialist safeguarding and security provider Schools Broadband, who provide us with the tools we need to keep your children safe and ensure that any potential safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

Below is a short summary of the tools we deploy.

#### **Online Filtering**

We have an age-appropriate web filtering service to help prevent access to online content that is illegal, inappropriate, or potentially harmful. In practice, this means the filter blocks known unsafe websites and content, including content that is unsuitable for children and prevents accidental exposure to harmful material while pupils are researching or browsing for learning.

#### **Online Monitoring**

The DfE makes a clear distinction between filtering and monitoring: whereas filtering is preventative and helps stop pupils reaching harmful content in the first place, monitoring is reactive and involves real-time alerts to help our teachers spot concerning activity so that we can respond appropriately and call in our specialist safeguarding staff if necessary.

#### **Safeguarding Concerns**

If we receive an alert that suggests a pupil may be at risk, our staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures and involve our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), as needed. This is part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities, which include recognising that children can be harmed online as well as offline.

## Protecting your children at home

Try to talk regularly about online life, set age-appropriate boundaries, and use parental controls where possible. If you need further help and advice you might find some of the links below useful:

- Government advice and a hub of parent resources: [Support for parents and carers to keep children safe online\(GOV.UK\)](#)
- Practical “getting started” guidance: [Kids Online Safety campaign \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- Help with parental controls, apps, devices, and screen time: [Internet Matters](#)
- Guidance and conversation starters for families: [NSPCC online safety](#)
- Support and advice for parents/carers: [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- If you’re worried about exploitation/grooming: [Thinkuknow \(NCA-CEOP\)](#)

***If you ever have concerns about something that has happened online, please contact a member of the DSL Team, we would always rather know and help early.***

# Curriculum and Teaching

## Rabbits Class The Oak



This half term, we have taught Elmer through a range of sensory activities. The pupils enjoyed activities linked to the story, including painting, messy play, and colour matching. We encouraged the pupils to communicate choices, explore different textures, and join in with repeated words and sounds from the story.



Pupils have enjoyed lots of pre-writing activities, including mark making, pattern tracing, finger painting, and sensory play to help develop their early writing and fine motor skills. We further supported the development of writing skills through letter formation activities, therapy putty and playdough activities, threading, and finger painting.

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In Maths, pupils worked on a range of number skills. They learned to recognise numbers and began to understand that numbers can be represented in different ways. Pupils also practiced counting forwards and backwards from a given number using concrete materials. We explored measurement, position, and shape through shape recognition activities and by introducing language linked to size and position.



During our Arts and Design lessons we have explored different media and materials and developed confidence in using a variety of tools and techniques. Our focus was 'Wild and Wonderful Creatures, through our Attention Autism sessions pupils have created a range of different animals.



In PE, we focused on developing gross motor skills through the use of the large climbing apparatus, balance beams, and sensory circuits. It has been lovely to see the confidence gained by all pupils as they explored different movements and physical activities.

This half term we have also been learning about personal hygiene and how to wash and dry our hands independently. We have encouraged all pupils to develop their independence by putting on and taking off their own coats with support and prompting where necessary.

## Hedgehogs Class Reception Year

What a busy half term Hedgehogs have had! They have embraced new challenges and learning with determination and enthusiasm and they have all had a lot of fun along the way!

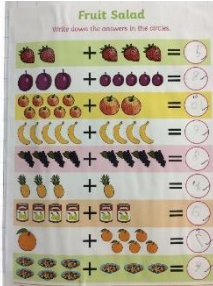


### Literacy

We have been continuing to embed the phonic sounds we know in both our reading and writing work. The children have been working extremely hard on the presentation of their writing and the construction of simple sentences and have rightly been very proud of the work they have produced!

## Maths

In our Maths work this half term we have been consolidating our knowledge of counting and finding the total number of objects. We have also begun to explore ordinality and consider where numbers to 10 are in relation to each other.



Through practical activities and games, the children have had to think carefully and make informed judgements about which is more or less. The children have consolidated their understanding of simple addition and what it means to add two numbers together and find the total.



## Physical Development



Hedgehogs Class have continued to develop and refine both their fine and gross motor skills. Through PE we have explored a range of skills, including climbing, balancing, running, and jumping as well as beginning to look at simple ball skills such as rolling and bouncing. We have been working hard to listen to and follow instructions in PE through a variety of games and activities. The children

particularly enjoyed the games involving the parachute!

In relation to their fine motor development, the children have had the opportunity to complete a range of activities such as threading paper flowers on to string to create a floral garland necklace and cutting around animals to create their own African safari collage.



## Understanding the World

Through our work on 'The Big Wide World' we have looked at both Africa and India through the texts Handa's Surprise and Lily's Garden of India, respectively. The children have looked at simple maps and the location of these countries as well as exploring some of the animals and plants you might find in these countries. They also had the opportunity to taste some exotic fruits which went down very well. All of the children took part fully in the activity, trying everything on offer and realising that they actually liked a lot of them!



## Expressive Arts and Design



Hedgehogs love to be creative! Whether it be colouring or painting or making masks for themselves, they consistently showcase their artistic skill and imagination in all activities. The children have created sunset paintings with silhouette animals overlaid on top producing a striking piece of Art!

Through our music work, the children have explored how to put instruments to music. They have been learning the African call and response song 'Che Che Kule' and

have worked as a class to play instruments alongside the singing of the song.



## Squirrels Class Year 1

### Art



In Squirrels Class the children are using a range of colours when printing; being able to apply paint consistently to achieve a print. They are creating designs that indicate deliberate pattern and/or colour choices. The children have overlapped their prints and described the results. This has allowed them to create a pattern or design with their prints for example their own name.



### Maths

In Squirrels Class, the children have used their knowledge from previous learning of recognising equal groups to now add equal groups together to find a total. They have focused on counting equal groups of 2, 5, and 10 and explored this within 50. They moved on to identifying and recording the number sentence to match the groups. For example, show children 5 pairs of socks and allow them to represent them in a different way, such as with counters, then encourage them to write the number sentence to represent it:  $2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 10$ . The children have been exposed to the language of multiplication and have been using the correct mathematical terminology within their own answers, for example "There are 5 equal groups of 2, so there are 10 in total."

## Computing



In Computing the children in Squirrels Class have been understanding the various aspects of using a computer to create and change text. Year 1 have familiarised themselves with typing on a keyboard and began using tools to change the look of their writing. They have also considered the differences between using a computer and writing on paper to create text. Year 1 focused on adding text and explored more ways to understand different keys on a digital keyboard using an iPad.



## **Badgers Class Year 2**

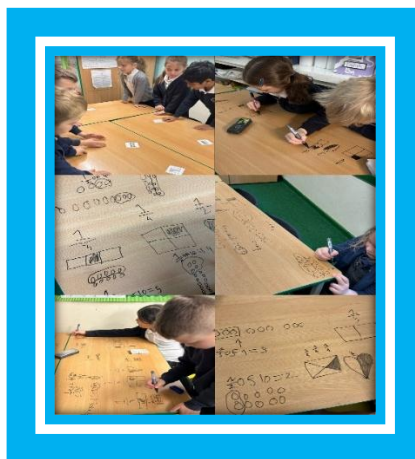


The Badgers Class has been working very hard and have made great progress in their learning this half term.

We started off by celebrating Earth Day and making "dirt cups." We enjoyed layering ingredients such as soil, dirt, worms, grass, and flowers to create our yummy, edible treats! We talked about why Earth Day is important and ways we can help take care of our planet.

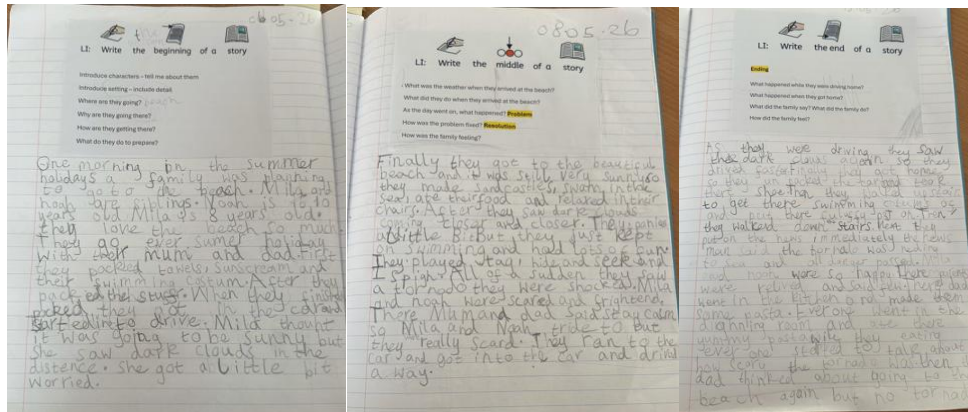
## Maths

We finished our topic on mass, capacity, and temperature. We became mini scientists during a hands-on experiment where we predicted and measured the capacity of different containers. We also started our new topic on fractions and have been learning to recognise and find  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of shapes and numbers.



## English

Our writing has really flourished this half term. We've been exploring stories with familiar settings and have written fantastic and imaginative stories - including characters, settings, problems, and resolutions.



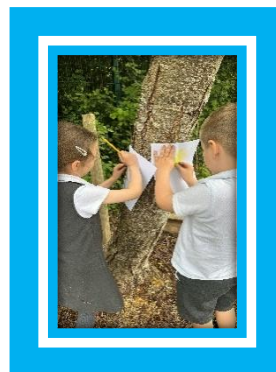
## Science

We've been learning all about plants, seeds, and bulbs. We've discovered how to care for them and what they need to thrive. We planted sunflowers, cress, and onion bulbs—we can't wait to watch them grow!

## Foundation Subjects

In Computing, we explored how music makes us feel. We talked about rhythm and pulse, listened to Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, and made patterns with instruments. We used iPads to create our own artistic compositions on Chrome Music Lab with shapes and images. We had fun listening back and seeing how our digital art and music came together.

In Art, we explored a range of drawing techniques using different materials. We experimented with texture by using touch and rubbings, creating detailed and textured effects.



# Attendance and Behaviour

## Behaviour

I'm delighted to share an important change we've made across our Federation that reflects our commitment to supporting every pupil's wellbeing and growth.

We have moved away from Class Charts and are now using Behaviour Smart, a system that recognises behaviour as a form of communication. This shift has been driven by feedback from parents and our own observations about the impact of traditional points-based systems on our pupils' confidence and self-esteem. When pupils were receiving red points, we noticed this was having a negative effect on them, and we wanted to create something more positive and purposeful.

The new system allows pupils to collect Behaviour Clickers, where all behaviours—not just those we might traditionally reward—can result in positive learning experiences. This approach helps us understand what our pupils are trying to communicate through their behaviour and respond with compassion and support.

We have updated our [PCS Behaviour Management Policy](#) to align with this new system, and I would encourage you to have a look at it by clicking on the link or on our school website. It outlines how we'll be supporting your child's emotional and social development in a way that builds their resilience and self-belief.

I'm excited about this change and the positive impact it will have on our school community.

## Attendance

### ATTENDANCE MATTERS



**EVERY DAY COUNTS...**  
Learning is a progressive activity. Each lesson and each day builds on another. If your child is absent for lessons that include demonstrations, discussions, experiments and other participation activities as part of the daily learning activities, they are missing learning that cannot be made up.



#### Benefits of Good Attendance

- Pupils with good attendance generally achieve higher grades.
- Pupils with good attendance generally enjoy school more.
- Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life.
- Good school attendance helps to develop other responsible patterns of behaviour.

#### Some Risks of Poor Attendance

- Pupils are likely to miss learning activities that their classmates have taken part in, which could mean they fall behind.
- They miss out on social interaction with friends/classmates - this can have a negative effect on the wellbeing and self-esteem.
- Low attendance is associated with anti-social behaviour and poor learning behaviours

**Attendance matters**, and I want to share why this is so important to all of us here at Priory Common School.

Every pupil belongs to our Priory Common School Family, and we genuinely miss them when they are not in school. High attendance is not just a school responsibility—it is fundamental to how we support our pupils and the wider community. We cannot achieve this without your partnership and support.

Our aim is for every child to achieve at least 95% attendance each year. You might wonder what this actually means in practice. An absence of 10 full days equates to falling below this target. To put this into perspective, if your child is in Reception and misses 10 days, they will have missed out on learning 10 sounds in their phonics lessons. These early foundations in reading are crucial, and every session counts.

We recognise that sometimes illness and unavoidable circumstances mean children cannot be in school, and we work with families to support these situations. However, we would encourage you to plan any appointments or activities around the school day where possible, and to avoid taking term-time holidays. The Department for Education guidance is clear that term holidays should not be taken during school time and can incur a fine from the Local Authority.

Thank you for your continued commitment to ensuring your child attends school regularly. Together, we can ensure every pupil gets the best possible start to their learning journey.

## Personal Development and Well-being

It is our aim at Priory Common School to equip pupils with the knowledge and Cultural Capital they need to succeed in life.

This is done through both our hidden and explicit curriculums for: Personal Development, Social Development, Physical Development, Spiritual Development, Moral Development, Cultural Development and British Values.

*I loved Pinocchio! I even watched the film at home afterwards as I liked the story so much.  
(Year 2 pupil)*



### SUMMER TERM 2026 – April - May

Whole School	Assemblies	Class Based
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Newsround – daily</li> <li>❖ Values - forgiveness</li> <li>❖ Makaton signs</li> <li>❖ Relationships</li> <li>❖ Faith day – Judaism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Weekly values assembly – honesty</li> <li>❖ Weekly welcome assembly</li> <li>❖ Weekly singing assembly</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key Stage 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ World Art Day</li> <li>❖ World Penguin Day</li> <li>❖ International Jazz Day</li> <li>❖ Victory in Europe Day</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Listening calendar – Escape into a world of music</li> <li>❖ WOW challenge</li> <li>❖ Theatre Visit – Pinocchio</li> <li>❖ Toscana Strings Visit – Wind in the Willows / The Tortoise and the Hare</li> <li>❖ Music Club – singing and signing</li> <li>❖ Design and Technology Club – sewing and weaving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Weekly listen to a story – author/ illustrator of the half term assembly – Aesop’s Fables</li> <li>❖ Weekly celebration assembly</li> <li>❖ British Values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Endangered Species Day</li> <li>❖ World Bee Day</li> </ul>
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*I liked the songs in the music show because they made me want to dance. (Year R Pupil)*



## Calendar Dates

- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Last day of half term
- **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May – School holiday (school closed to pupils)**
- **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June – INSET day school closed to pupils**
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Pupils return to school
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Year R Curriculum Evening
- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June – Year 1 Curriculum Evening
- Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June – Year 2 Curriculum Evening
- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June – assessment week including Phonics Screening
- Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June – Maths Workshop
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June – September 2026 intake parent/career meeting
- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June – Bradwell Village School Year 2 transition picnic

- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June – Sports day (weather permitting)
- Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July – Bradwell Village Year 2 transition day
- Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Sports day (back up option 2- weather permitting)
- Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – September 2026 intake picnic
- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July – End of year reports
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July – open evening
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July – Year 2 leavers celebration
- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Year 2 leavers party
- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July – last day of school year
- **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July**– INSET day **school closed to pupils**
- **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July – Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August – Summer holidays (school closed to pupils)**
- **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September** INSET day **school closed to pupils**
- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – children return to school for new academic year

## Message from our Executive Headteacher

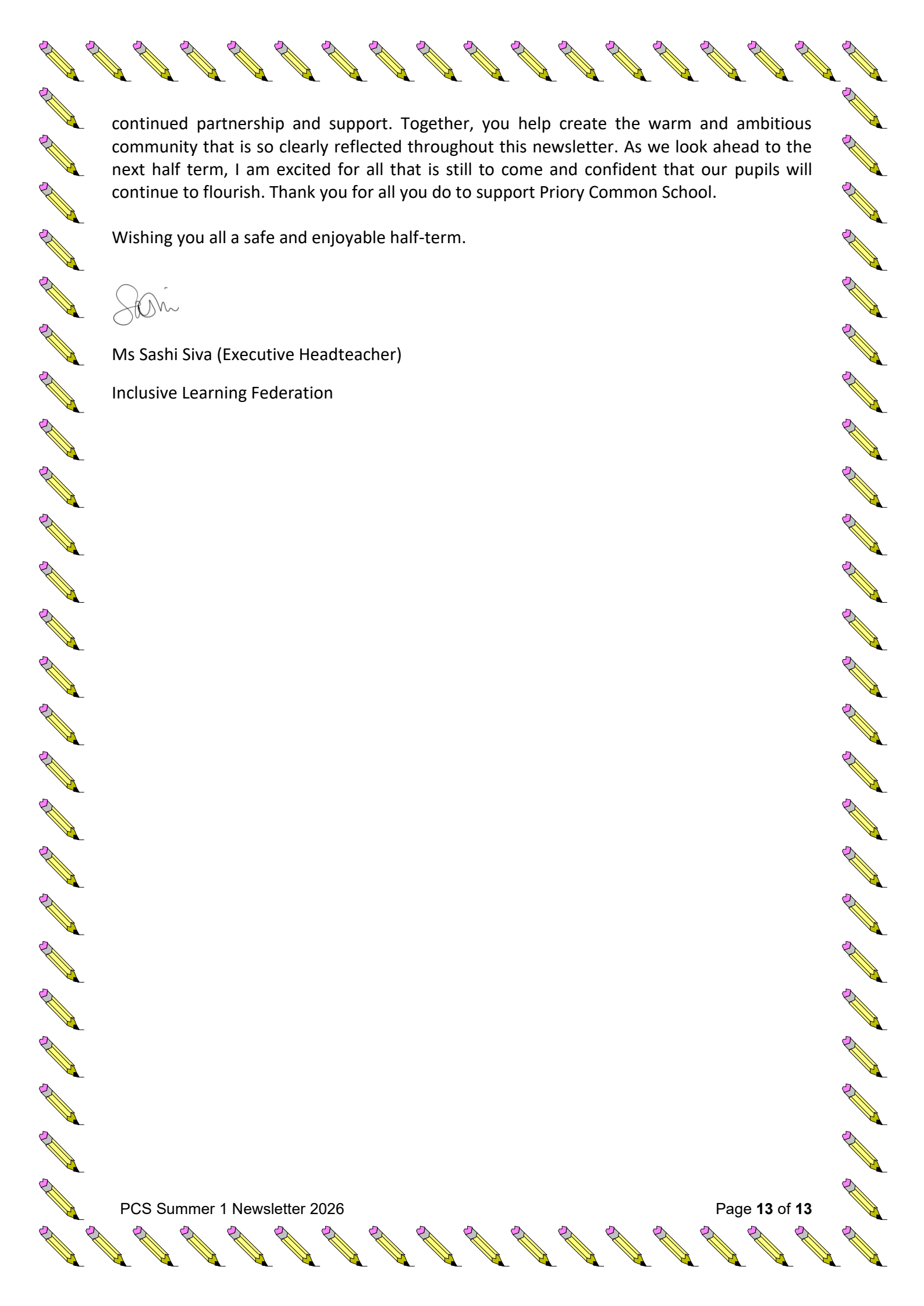
I am delighted to reflect on another vibrant and successful half term at Priory Common School. This newsletter captures so much of what makes our school such a special place: a strong sense of belonging, ambitious learning, rich experiences, and a deep commitment to ensuring every child is known, valued, and supported to thrive. Across the school, pupils have shown enthusiasm, resilience, and pride in their learning, and it is wonderful to see the many ways in which they continue to grow both academically and personally.

From our youngest learners in The Oak and Reception through to pupils in Key Stage 1, the breadth of experiences on offer this half term has been exceptional. Pupils have engaged in sensory storytelling, early writing, number work, science, art, computing and music with confidence and curiosity. Alongside this, memorable enrichment opportunities such as the performances of *Pinocchio*, *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Tortoise and the Hare* have helped bring learning to life and broaden pupils' cultural experiences. These moments matter greatly, as they help children develop creativity, communication, confidence, and joy in learning.



I have also been pleased to read about the continued strength of the school's wider work around safeguarding, communication, attendance, and behaviour. The emphasis on keeping children safe online, strengthening home-school communication, encouraging strong attendance and introducing a more nurturing, relational approach through Behaviour Smart all reflect the values we want to see in action every day. It is especially heartening to know that families recognise Priory Common as a place where children feel safe and where pupils with SEND are well supported to succeed.

My thanks go to our dedicated staff for the care, expertise, and energy they bring each day, and to our families for your



continued partnership and support. Together, you help create the warm and ambitious community that is so clearly reflected throughout this newsletter. As we look ahead to the next half term, I am excited for all that is still to come and confident that our pupils will continue to flourish. Thank you for all you do to support Priory Common School.

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable half-term.



Ms Sashi Siva (Executive Headteacher)

Inclusive Learning Federation