



PRIORY COMMON SCHOOL



SPRING 1 NEWSLETTER 2026

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

Message from Head of School

Dear Priory Common School Community,

What a whirlwind these past weeks have been since returning from our Christmas holidays! Time truly seems to have flown by as we approach our upcoming half-term break.

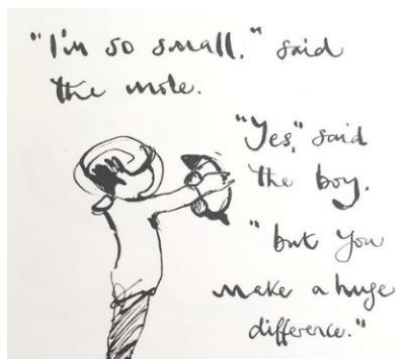
I'm excited to share some wonderful developments happening at our school. We've recently launched our new Early Bird Mascots, which you can read more about in the attendance section of this newsletter. This initiative is another step in creating an engaging and motivating environment for our young learners.

We've also been focusing on expanding our pupils' cultural capital, which is so important for broadening their horizons and understanding of the world. At the end of last term, we were honoured to welcome our local MP to the school, providing our pupils with a unique insight into local governance and civic engagement.

Even more thrilling was the opportunity for our Year 2 pupils to visit the UK Parliament in London this term. This incredible experience has undoubtedly been a highlight, offering our young learners a remarkable chance to see democracy in action and understand more about our national institutions. Full details of this exciting trip can be found in the Personal Development section of the newsletter.

These experiences are more than just outings; they're about inspiring our pupils, broadening their perspectives, and helping them understand the world around them.

As we move towards our half-term break, I'm incredibly proud of how our pupils have embraced these learning opportunities with such enthusiasm and curiosity.



Warmest regards,

Gill Cash

Head of School



Curriculum and Teaching

Rabbits Class The Oak

This half term we have encouraged the children to enhance their handwriting by focusing on fine-motor skills and letter formation, through a variety of ways using sensory activities, writing, and attention autism activities. Our learning activities have been based around our story book for the half term 'Goldilocks and The Three Bears'

In Maths we have focused on weighing, ordering in size, number sorting and counting.

Each morning the children enjoyed our new daily music and movement session, this session encouraged the children to dance, sing, and move to different rhythms. This term we have focused on fast and slow movements.



Hedgehogs Class Reception Year

Literacy



We have continued to embed our phonic knowledge and apply the Set 1 sounds we know to blend, read and write simple CVC words. We have begun to read books containing simple words and phrases linked to our phonic knowledge. We have continued to refine our handwriting and perfect the formation of each letter of the alphabet.

Mathematics

We have begun to identify different representations of numbers up to 10. With these numbers, we found one more and one less than a number and further developed our skill of subitising. We explored simple 2D shapes and looked at simple repeating patterns. Through our work on snowflakes, we looked at patterns in nature. We explored addition and what this means, understanding the + and = symbols.

Physical Development

We participated in gymnastic sessions, learning to balance and hold key gymnastic shapes. We moved with coordination and linked movements together. We learnt to jump and land safely. We continued to develop our pencil control and fine motor skills.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We looked at making resolutions linked to the new year and discussed setting goals for what we wanted to achieve in the year ahead. We looked at how to resolve conflicts with others and explored the concept of teamwork. We also looked at perseverance and overcoming challenges.



Squirrels Class Year 1



In Year 1 the children have been able to solve problems as they work, for example, how to make a shape in 3D that they haven't previously practised; being able to create a tree sculpture that includes a variety of paper shapes and includes details that add interest. They used at least three different techniques for shaping paper. The children have been able to create a beautiful tree of life sculpture that includes several different techniques for shaping paper.

Badgers Class Year 2

Badgers class started the year with a bang! We celebrated the New Year by creating fireworks and ringing in 2026 with an exciting countdown.

Maths

We learned all about money using coins and notes in practical, hands-on activities. We enjoyed shopping role play to practice calculating totals and finding change.

English

We have been working hard on our comprehension skills to help us understand a range of different texts. We have also been building stamina in writing and improving our sentences by using correct punctuation and adding more detail.

Science

In science, we learned about plants, including light and dark, and what plants need to survive. We can't wait to see more plants in the spring!

Foundation subjects

In PE, we developed our gymnastics skills, like superheroes to stretch, balance, jump, and roll. In geography, we've been learning about our wonderful world and the physical and human features around us. In RE, we explored special people and miracles from different faiths. In art, we explored mixing colours and creating textures using different tools. In computing, we turned into programmers — creating and choosing the best routes for our Beebots.



Attendance and Behaviour

Behaviour

**Well done Squirrels Class
with an amazing 97% positive
behaviours this half term.
With Badgers Class following close behind with
95%.**



All our pupils across the whole school continue to be brilliant; they have accumulated an impressive 12,024 positive behaviour points over the school year! This maintains our 97% positive behaviours across the school – a truly excellent accomplishment that we should all be proud of.

Attendance

I wanted to share some important updates and celebrations from our school this half term in relation to attendance.

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.

Attendance continues to be a key focus for us, and I'm sharing some honest insights about our current position. Our overall attendance is sitting at 92.1%, which is below our target of 94.5%.

We'll be sending individual attendance reports for all pupils midway through the school year. I encourage every family to carefully review these reports and reflect on your child's attendance.

We're committed to supporting our families, so please don't hesitate to reach out if you need any assistance in improving attendance. Working together, we can help ensure every pupil maximises their learning opportunities.



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



On a more positive note, I'm delighted to share an exciting initiative that has been enthusiastically received by our pupils - our Early Bird Mascots! This fun new approach is already making a difference in reducing late arrivals. Each day, if all expected pupils arrive on time, the class receives an Early Bird - a charming little beanie bird with its own name - to look after.





Some pupils initially wondered if we meant a real bird, which made us smile! Our mascots have a playful backstory: we encourage pupils to help "mummy bird" by arriving on time, as she has a very busy time looking after her baby birds all day and night.



The impact has been immediate. We've already seen a reduction in the number of late entries in our registers. Our aim remains ambitious: we want ALL pupils to arrive on time every single day.



Thank you for your continued support in making Priory Common School a place of punctuality, learning, and fun.

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.

SPRING TERM 2026 – January

Whole School	Assemblies	Class Based
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Newsround – daily ❖ Values - Caring ❖ Makaton signs – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Toilet ○ Help me ○ Help you ○ I want ○ Please ○ Thank you ❖ Dreams and Goals ❖ Faith day – Buddhism ❖ Listening calendar – Escape into a world of music ❖ WOW challenge ❖ International Mother Language themed day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Weekly values assembly – honesty ❖ Weekly welcome assembly ❖ Weekly singing assembly ❖ Weekly listen to a story – author/ illustrator of the half term assembly – Julia Donaldson ❖ Weekly celebration assembly ❖ British Values 	<p>Key Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Year 2 Trip to UK Parliament ❖ Writing Club – creative writing ❖ Art Club – drawing ❖ Reading Club – performance and drama ❖ Epiphany (6/1) ❖ Martin Luther King Day (15/1) ❖ Burns Night (25/1) ❖ Puzzle day (29.01) ❖ National story telling week (29/1 to 5/2) ❖ Shrove Tuesday (17/2)

In addition to all of the above that took place over just one month, I am delighted to share an incredible learning experience our Year 2 pupils recently enjoyed - a fantastic visit to the UK Parliament!

Our pupils were fortunate to secure a personalised guided tour that went far beyond a simple school trip. They explored the heart of our democratic system, learning about what Parliament means, why people work there, and how rules help everyone live safely and fairly.

The day was filled with exciting sightseeing across London. Our pupils were thrilled to see iconic landmarks including:

- The London Eye
- Big Ben (and they even heard him chime!)
- The Guards Museum
- Buckingham Palace
- Marble Arch
- The horse face statue
- The windows from the House of Commons



Upon returning to school, the pupils were buzzing with excitement, eager to share their new-found knowledge. This experience has been a wonderful opportunity to support their cultural capital and provide a real-world context to their learning.

The Lords seats are red and the Commons seats are green.



The Bills ping pong and then the King signs them to be Laws.

The seats in the House of Lords are red because red was an expensive colour back then.

The Speaker controls order in the House of Commons.



The MPs represent lots of different people.

Calendar Dates

- Friday 13th February – last day of half term
- Monday 16th – Friday 20th February – school holiday (school closed to pupils)
- Monday 23rd February – pupils return to school
- Friday 27th March – last day of half term
- Monday 30th March – Friday 10th April - school holiday (school closed to pupils)

Message from our Executive Headteacher

What an incredible start to 2026 we've had! I'm delighted to share the exciting highlights from our Spring 1 term!

Our pupils returned from the Christmas break brimming with energy and enthusiasm for learning. It's been wonderful to witness their curiosity and engagement across all areas of school life.

We've introduced a fun new initiative with our Early Bird Mascots, which has already made a positive impact on punctuality. Classes can now earn a mascot by ensuring everyone arrives on time, and we're seeing fewer late arrivals as a result.

This term has been rich with opportunities to build cultural capital. We were honoured to welcome our local MP to the school, and our Year 2 pupils enjoyed an unforgettable trip to the UK Parliament, taking in famous London landmarks along the way.

Across our school, learning has been vibrant and diverse. Our Early Years children explored the classic tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears while developing handwriting and number skills. Reception pupils have been building their phonics, reading simple books, and learning about teamwork and perseverance. Year 1 classes have been solving creative problems, celebrating the New Year, learning about money, and even trying their hand at programming with Beebots. Year 2 continued developing skills across multiple subjects, complementing their exciting Parliament visit.

Our pupils' behaviour continues to be outstanding, with an impressive 12,024 positive behaviour points—representing a 97% positive behaviour rate. Our current attendance stands at 92.1%, and we'll soon be sending home mid-year attendance reports. We're always here to support families, so please reach out if you need any assistance.

Whole school enrichment has been a key focus this term. We've enjoyed weekly assemblies, singing, Makaton signs, and a values focus on caring. Highlights included our Faith Day exploring Buddhism and celebrating International Mother Language Day. Our reading, writing, and art clubs have provided additional opportunities for pupils to explore their interests, alongside national storytelling events and themed days.

Thank you for your continued support in making Priory Common School such a vibrant learning community.

