



Weekly Newsletter

21st July 2026

Making learning a lifelong adventure

respect...responsibility...resilience...kindness...confidence...honesty

Dear Parents/Carers

School's Out for Summer

We have arrived at the end of another academic year and this is our final school newsletter before the summer break.

The children and the staff team have worked incredibly hard all year and have so much to be proud of. We continue to be grateful for the support of parents and families, that undoubtedly aids the children's achievement. We received our KS2 test results last week and are so proud of the children in Year 6 who finish school with a very strong set of results that, alongside other statutory assessments in Reception, Year 1 Phonics and Year 4 Multiplication, continue to be significantly above national averages.

However, the achievements of all our children are measured not just in terms of academic attainment and progress, but also include sporting, creative or scientific and technical endeavours, as well as their personal growth, development of character and values, and the way in which they overcome barriers, fears or anxieties.

Creative and sporting endeavour has been very much in evidence over the last week, as we concluded (on our third attempt, due to the heatwave) our Sports Days with our Years 5 and 6 pupils last Wednesday. You can find the results of the house competition for all of our sports days below. Congratulations to Yellow House who were overall winners for the second year in a row. Thank you also to Mr George, Mrs Shewbridge, Mrs Harrison and the Sports Captains for leading and helping at the events, and for keeping score.

High Beeches Sports Days 2026

	1st Place	2 nd Place
Infant Sports Day	Yellow House	Blue House
Year 3/4 Field Events	Yellow House	Blue House
Year 3/4 Track Events	Yellow House	Red House
Year 5/6 Field Events	Red House	Blue House
Year 5/6 Track Events	Red House	Yellow House
OVERALL WINNERS	Yellow House	Red House

Yesterday we enjoyed our annual HBGT, with a range of acts from singing and dancing to piano and French horn. Congratulations to all those who auditioned and to the following children who represented their classes in the whole school final, which was hosted by Aseel and Isaiah from Year 5 and 'judged' by Mr George, Mr Gardiner and Mrs Reeve.



- ✓ Elm - Lyla, Blake, Amelia
- ✓ Cedar - Albert
- ✓ Hazel - Charlotte, Lucy and Hettie
- ✓ Willow - Sienna, Otilie, Ava
- ✓ Birch- Teddy
- ✓ Redwood - Hannah and Jemima
- ✓ Pine – Rafe and Amelia
- ✓ Maple - Emma, Elle, Cleo, Rose, Phoebe,
- ✓ Hawthorn - Harry and Hugo
- ✓ Ash - Reenie and Emma
- ✓ Sycamore - Charlie V
- ✓ Rowan - Thea

Our Leavers

The Year 5/6 Sports Day was one of a number of final events for our outgoing Year 6 cohort taking place over the final week of term. On Tuesday last week, Revd John Fellows led our annual Year 6 *It's Your Move* assembly, which provided space for reflection about the move to secondary school in the context of the children's achievements, hopes and dreams. See Revd Fellows's closing prayer below. This also provided an opportunity for the children in Years 4 and 5, who were also in the assembly, to think about their hopes for their peers as they get ready to move on.

On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings last week, the children of both Year 6 classes and the Year 6 staff team presented their Leavers' Production – *Gigglebox*. This entertaining, amusing and, at times, quite poignant musical production took us on a televisual journey through a number of spoofs of well-known TV shows all based around life in a typical primary school! The acting, singing, dance and movement were second to none and both casts truly excelled themselves. Our leavers then completed their rites of passage, with an evening celebration on the school field on yesterday evening and a final leavers' award assembly this morning.

More Thank You's

A huge THANK YOU to all those involved with planning, running and setting-down the FoHBS Summer Fair on the weekend before last, and to all those who attended. Hundreds turned out through the afternoon and enjoyed visiting the Year 6 Dragons' Den Stalls, as well as other stalls games and activities and food and drink stands. The School Choir sang beautifully and the *Number 7 Band* entertained the crowds too. As I understand it, the event, together with the FoHBS Summer Raffle which an amazing £4,000! Do have a look at today's FoHBS round-up which details all of their successes in the 2025/26 year: a year in which they raised over £20,000!

Staff News

In addition to our pupil leavers, today we are also saying a sad farewell to Mrs Kat Harrison, as she moves to a new post at Kimpton Primary School. Mrs Harrison has been at High Beeches for a phenomenal 12 years, first as class teacher and then as a valued member of the school leadership team, and will be sorely missed. I am sure everyone will join me in wishing her a very successful move as she starts work there in September.

And Finally...

I would like to wish you all a peaceful and relaxing school holiday and to thank all those who have sent end of term good wishes or gifts. We are very grateful for your support.

School re-opens on Wednesday 2 September. I would like to remind parents of children who will be in Years 5 and 6 in September that they should notify their teachers via the year group email early in September if their child is permitted to walk to and from school alone.

Do please read through the rest of this newsletter for various useful information, including news about changes to our expectations for September. We look forward to seeing everyone then.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Walker
Headteacher

*May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.
May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home,
And may the hand of a friend always be near.*



End of the Year Awards

This week we awarded our traditional *Leavers' Awards* as follows.

Boys' Sports: Charlie I

Writing Cup: Erin

Resilience: Tommy

Girls' Sport: Eva

Arts Cup: Matas

Perseverance: Evie O'G

Drama Cup: Yasmin

All Rounder: Harrison

Values Shield: Juliet

In addition to this, we also presented our *End of the Year Awards* for English, mathematics and school values, on Friday, for pupils whose achievement really stands out in each area in Reception to Year 5. This may reflect outstanding progress from a starting point of greater challenge or simply for consistently high levels of attainment. Congratulations to the following pupils:

	English	Mathematics	Our Values
• Reception Chestnut Class	Henry	Charlie	Cleo
• Reception Oak Class	Emma	Alex	Astrid
• Year 1 Cedar Class	Sophie	Finn	Mila
• Year 1 Elm Class	Matteo	Amelia	Kyan
• Year 2 Hazel Class	Henry	Jack	Freida
• Year 2 Willow Class	Henry	Chin	Cara
• Year 3 Birch Class	Emilia	Felicity	Mubarak
• Year 3 Redwood Class	Jacob	Arthur	Jessica
• Year 4 Maple Class	Rosie	Logan	Eli
• Year 4 Pine Class	Amelia	Jolie	Thomas
• Year 5 Ash Class	Sienna	Emma	Oscar
• Year 5 Hawthorn Class	Sam	Nina	Eva

Sports Desk

We were all sorry to see the England Men's team bowing out of the World Cup last week, but what a match on Saturday night! Third place, their best since 1966, can't be too bad...

The women's World Cup takes place in 2027 with qualifying matches this October to December and, on this subject, a group of Year 4 and 5 girls played their own friendly football matches away against the Grove Juniors last week. Both teams played really well, the Year 4 team winning 1-0 and the Year 5s finishing 1-0 down.

Congratulations to Amari in Year 6 who represented Herts at the U11 Basketball England County Tournament earlier this month, winning all 4 Games and emerging as the gold medal winners for 2026/2027.

Support for Families

Parents are invited to view the latest edition of [Families Hertfordshire Magazine](#). The summer issue includes ideas for things to do over the coming weeks, as well as features on the themes of education and parenting.

Community Matters

Harpenden SUMMER SESSIONS

MUSIC NATURE ARTS THEATRE COMEDY

FOUR FREE EVENTS FOR FAMILIES!

- 31st July "Don't Worry Bee Happy" Children's Theatre
- 7th August Friday Sounds Music Festival
- 15th August Angie Mack Street Performance
- 18th August Pop Up Farm in Rothamsted Park

www.harpenden.gov.uk/summersessions or follow us on social media

A SPONSORSHIP IDEA FOR YOUR SCHOOL: THE LOOP THE LOOP CHALLENGE

We're sending this information out to schools and PTAs as a fundraising idea. It's also a great way to get outdoors, enjoy nature and find out more about Harpenden.

The Harpenden Green Loop is a 5km walking and cycling route around Harpenden. The "Loop" can be done in one go or in sections at different times. Take photos as you go to show your sponsors you've completed the challenge.

Harpenden Town Council can supply the sponsorship forms

We can also provide stickers for every one who takes part

The Harpenden Green Loop maps are available on our website to view online or as print outs. The route is easy to follow. There are slight differences to the walking and cycling route, and there's also a half loop.

The Green Loop takes you to beautiful parks, playgrounds and paths – some you probably know well and others you may not have seen before.

www.harpenden.gov.uk/loop
Telephone: 01582 767966
Email: harpenden.town.council@harpenden.gov.uk

Further Information and Reminders

From September 2026

We would like to highlight 2 changes to our expectations at school for when we return in September, both of which we hope will ensure that the children are highly focused on their learning and on developing our *Three Rs* - *Responsibility, Respect and Resilience*.

Day-to-day Stationery

As a school, we spend around £18,000 per year on stationery for pupils. Although this includes the children's exercise books, display paper, paints and some other items, a large proportion of this is spent on pens, pencils, glue-sticks, mini-whiteboard pens, rulers and other consumables used individually by pupils throughout the day. The school budget is tight and quite a number of members of staff have noticed that many children do not look after them as well as they could and items are often lost or wasted (with, for example, lids being left off glue sticks and pens).

In the later years, children are sometimes allowed to bring in pencil cases and some of their own stationery. However, this can result in an element of competition, which perhaps excludes or disadvantages some and can become something of a distraction from the children's learning.

We would therefore like to raise our expectations and improve the consistency of approach across the school from September and have carefully considered what consumable items each child will need in each part of the school throughout the school year. These items have been ordered cost-effectively, in bulk and we are requesting that parents make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of stationery, which has been added to your child's Arbor account today. Therefore, the children should not bring in any of their own stationery items or pencil cases at the start of the new school year in September. Arrangements will be as follows:

- Infants (Reception to Y2) - £5. This supports the cost of stationery for the whole year, which is managed in each classroom, with staff monitoring how the children look after their things.
- Juniors (Y3-6) Starter Pack - £5 for Year 3/4 and £7 for Year 5/6. Each child will be provided with a pencil case containing the items they need and matched to the Year 3/4 or Year 5/6 curriculum. These will be sent home at the start of term in September for parents to name label and should be returned to school promptly, from which point they will be kept permanently in school. As items run out, or if the children lose or damage them, they will be able to purchase replacement items from our new stationery shop, which will be run by the pupils.

From Fidget Toys to Focus Tools

Some parents will be aware that a small number of children, particularly those who are neurodivergent and have a diagnosis of or characteristics associated with anxiety, ADHD or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), may benefit from the use of a discreet 'fidget' or 'fiddle' item in the classroom. When used appropriately, these tools can support self-regulation by helping pupils manage their attention, sensory processing needs, and emotional wellbeing. Providing a suitable outlet for excess energy can enable children to focus more effectively on teaching and learning, while the tactile input gained from squeezing, twisting, or moving a fidget item can also have a calming effect, helping to reduce stress, anxiety and feelings of sensory overload.

Following some recent training and advice from other professionals on how these are used, we have decided to revise our approach to these, to ensure that they are used in an impactful way, as consistently as possible. This means that, from September, pupils should no longer bring their own 'fidget toys' in from home, but will have the opportunity (where this has been agreed as an appropriate strategy in consultation with the class teacher and Mrs Burley, our SENCO) to use a 'focus tool' from a class set that has been purchased to keep in school with financial support from FoHBS.

Summer Holiday Clubs

- ✓ [Apex Sports](#) – Sports Activities with Mr George – 22nd-24th July, 27th-29th July, 3rd-5th Aug, 26th-28th Aug.
- ✓ [Baking Buddies](#) – Baking with Mrs Shafer – 10th-14th Aug, 17th-21st Aug, 24th and 25th Aug.
- ✓ [Sewing Club](#) – Sewing with Mrs Ward – 23rd July, 4th Aug and 20th Aug.

Lunchtime Helpers

Thank you to everyone who has been able to find time to volunteer at lunchtimes in school this year. It's a great way for parents to see another aspect of the children's school day and for the children to see some familiar faces. We always need help, so please [sign up via this link if you can](#). Thank you

High Beeches Primary School, Aldwickbury Crescent, Harpenden, AL5 5SD 01582 767966
admin@highbeeches.herts.sch.uk www.highbeeches.herts.sch.uk @highbeechesprimaryschool

Diary Dates

A fuller list of dates for the academic year will be published in September.

Tuesday 1 September 2026	<i>Staff Training Day</i>
Wednesday 2 September 2026	<i>School opens for Autumn Term</i>
4 to 10 September 2026	<i>Year Group Meet the Teachers Sessions:</i> • Year 6 Fri 4 Sept 8:50am • Year 5 - Mon 7 Sept 8:50am • Year 2 - Mon 7 Sept 2:30pm • Year 3 - Tues 8 Sept 8:50am • Year 1 - Tues 8 Sept 2:30pm • Reception - Wed 9 Sept 8:50am • Year 4 - Thurs 10 Sept 8:50am
Wednesday 9 September 2026	<i>Reception pupils begin full days</i>
Fri 2 and 9 October 2026	<i>FoHBS Movie Nights</i>
Friday 16 October 2026	<i>FoHBS Wine Tasting event</i>
Friday 23 October 2026	<i>School closes for half-term break at normal time</i>
Monday 2 November 2026	<i>School opens for Autumn Term 2</i>