



News on the Ninth

December 2024

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of an exciting and busy term, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued partnership and to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the staff at Commonswood.

Our sincere thanks go to the Friends of Commonswood, our PTA, who are such a busy band of volunteers. They are always keen to attract new active members so if you feel that you can commit some time, however small, please do contact them by emailing commonswoodpta@yahoo.com



Christmas Lunch

Children will be served their lunch by staff on Monday 9th (Reception, Y1 and Y2) and Tuesday 10th (Years 3-6) December. The Kitchen staff give up their free time on Sunday to prepare a feast, so a big thank you to them. All children will receive a Christmas lunch unless you have told us otherwise.

Christmas Cards

Pupils have created some lovely decorations to help make the halls, corridors and classrooms feel festive. The trees are now in place and the Commonswood post boxes are already receiving many cards.

If children plan to send cards, they need to pop them in the boxes and make sure that the children's **full name and class** are shown clearly. It is also a good opportunity for the children to use their best handwriting! The last card delivery will be Monday 16th. Please do not send chocolate coins in the cards.





PTA Festive Fun

This term has seen the PTA organise lots of events and together we have raised £1600. Highlights include film nights, a Halloween cake sale, a preloved uniform sale, a tree at St Francis church Christmas Tree Festival with decorations made by our art club and a Christmas wreath making evening for the adults. We hope you and your children have enjoyed these opportunities.

And we haven't finished 2024 yet!! The Christmas Fair is being held this Saturday, 14th December 12noon-3pm. The all in one tickets allows children to take part in all the activities and is only available to purchase via PTA Events before the day [Friends of Commonswood PTA](#).

All other ticket options are available on the day and we look forward to seeing you there.

We have lots of events planned for 2025, including a family fun night. Use the calendar for more information.

<https://www.commonswood.herts.sch.uk/site/data/files/documents/pta/97B08F2FFDCA84FE0BC6AFD1B34AB30C.pdf>

The PTA team would like to thank you all for your support and generosity, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.



Online Safety Theme – Health, Well-being and lifestyle

At home, please could you have a discussion with your child regarding this area.

- In EYFS and KS1, it could be discussing rules to stay safe when using technology and having clear time limits.
- In Lower KS2, it could be discussing the negative effects of spending long periods on technology and identifying when it would be sensible to limit technology use.
- In Upper KS2 it could be how technology can affect health both positively and negatively. Recognise and discuss the pressures that technology can place on someone and discuss how to manage it. in a game may make others feel.
- In Upper KS2, how to report online bullying within different apps / websites and when it is appropriate to report to the police.



Mobile Phones and online devices

The use of mobile phones and social media by children has been in the news over the past several months – due to the harmful effects on their mental health. Christmas is a time when children may be given a mobile phone as a present. If you are introducing this technology or any other internet-connected device, it is best to set clear rules from the beginning. Although your child may grumble at first, it will help reduce the likelihood of being subject to online bullying and them misusing the technology.

Our recommendation is that if your child is given access to any form of social media, it is made clear that you, as a parent, may, and will, view their messages from time to time.

By doing this, other parents have found that it has helped make their children think before sending messages and help prevent receiving continued unpleasant items.

We would also advise: not allowing devices in the bedroom and where they play games / communicate with others, this is done in a room which can be easily monitored.



PE Kits

Please ensure your child has white t-shirt with no collar or logos, navy blue shorts and trainers / plimsols for PE lessons. PE kits should be in school on a Monday and will be sent home on a Friday. PE lessons continue up to the end of term.



PE News

We have had a very busy term full of exciting sporting events!

Our basketball team showed commitment and sportsmanship in their competition. They beat all of our local school in Welwyn and Hatfield which led them to a final at the district event in St Albans – an amazing achievement.

A group of Year 5 and 6 children went to Monks Walk school to hone their table tennis skills ready for the table tennis competition, whilst others learned a new skill – archery.

Year 3 attended a multi-skills event, where they were involved in a range of activities that support their physical literacy – understanding those core skills needed for all sports.

Our netball team have been visiting a local secondary school to train alongside other schools and play matches in readiness for next year's netball league games.

Our football team have already begun their challenge to come top of the local school league. They are hoping to be successful in their last match before Christmas.

In the cross-country event at the beginning of term, five of our fastest runners competed in the cross country event at Stanborough lakes – it was very muddy!

Well done to all those who have represented our school in a respectful, committed way – we are very proud of all of you!

We look forward to a busy Spring term of events.



PE News – Fun Run

Thank you to all the children for taking part in this whole school event. We all raised an amazing £2,251 which is being used to purchase football goals that will be used by all year groups in the summer term and for years to come.

Well done to Eden in Year 4, Lacie in Year 2, Poppy in Reception and Nia in Year 1 all of whom raised over £100 each.

Year R / Year 1 and Year 4 have all won extra Orchard time due to collecting the most money in their Key stage.



Severe Weather Plan / School Closures

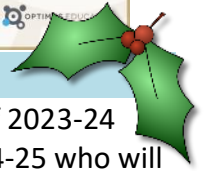
We will text parents and send an email if the school is closed due to severe weather or for any other unexpected / unforeseen circumstance. Please ensure your contact details are correct and up-to-date in the Arbor parent portal. We will also update the school website.

Lost Property

We are receiving an increasing quantity of un-named, lost property. In order for these to be returned, please label your child's belongings with a name and class in permanent ink

If your child has lost any items of school uniform, please ask them to speak to their class teacher to arrange to go to the lost property boxes at break time. We will put lost property boxes out on both playgrounds on dry days. Any unclaimed lost property will be recycled of at the end of the term.





School Council

On Monday 11th November, as part of our Remembrance assembly, the School Council of 2023-24 handed over to this year's elected children. Welcome to our new School Council for 2024-25 who will be representing the views of the children throughout the forthcoming year.



Year 2



Year 3



Year 4



Year 5



Year 6



Reception Applications for September 2025

Please be aware that admissions for reception 2025 are open and close on 15th January. Nursery children do not automatically get allocated a place at Commonswood so parents must complete the online application through the local authority website. <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/primary-junior-and-middle-schools/primary-junior-and-middle-school-places.aspx>



Parent Forum – Young Carers' Policy - 8th January 2025



Who are young carers?

A young carer is a young person, under the age of 18, who has a caring responsibility. This is usually for a family member who has a disability, long-term illness.

We have a number of children at school who are registered Young Carers and have a school policy to identify the support provided by Commonswood.

If you are interested in attending the parent forum to review the school's policy, please email the office (admin@commonswood.herts.sch.uk) A copy of the policy will be emailed out to you before the meeting. Your child does not need to be a Young Carer for you to attend.

Please let us know that you will be attending by Monday 6th January so that we can prepare a suitably sized room.

Nursery

The children are becoming very excited as we prepare for Christmas. A Christmas tree appeared in the role play which they have enjoyed decorating!

We had a lovely time in the school grounds looking for Winter trees. The children have learnt that some are bare, and some are evergreens. We brought back some pieces of pine tree, pine cones, holly and some twigs and used them to make some Christmas decorations.

We also explored the foliage more closely along with playdough, using it to create prints.

We have also been very busy learning lots of songs for our Christmas Show, we hope that you enjoy it!

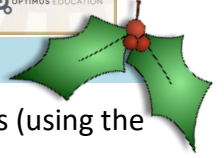


Reception

Reception were very lucky and had a visit from Animal UK. All children had the opportunity to look, touch or hold a variety of animals including; a bearded dragon, Burmese python, tarantula, skunk and a 'little owl'! Everyone was very brave.



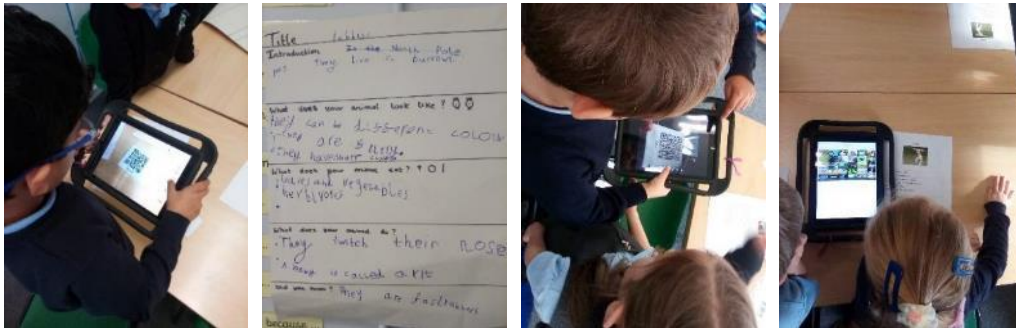
Year 1



In Year 1, the children have started their computing learning from creating digital paintings (using the computers) to programming animation on Scratch Junior and Beebots (on the iPad).

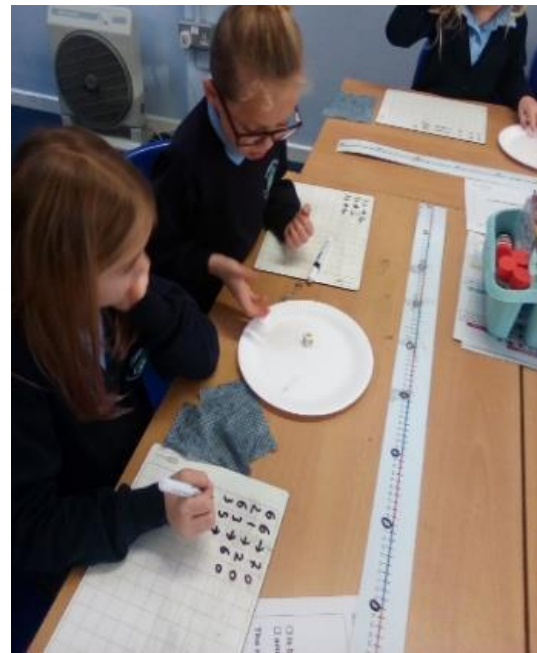
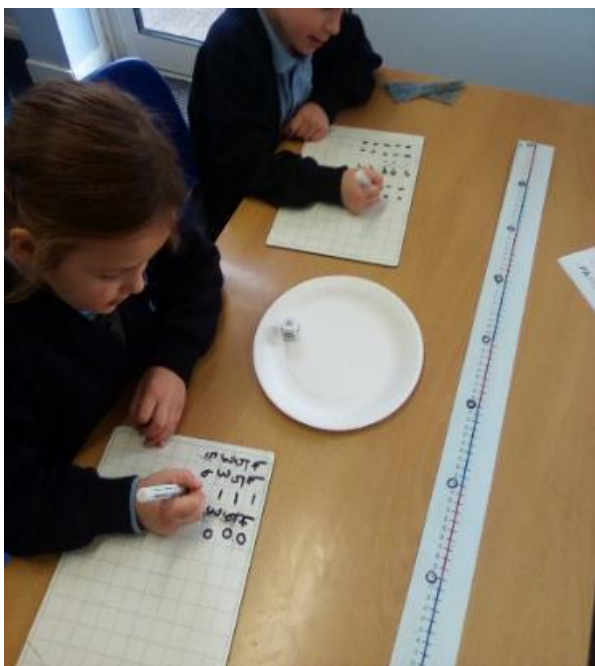


The children have also used their IT skills to research an animal in literacy. They then used this information to write their own Non-Fiction text.



Year 2

In year 2, we have been learning to round two-digit numbers to the nearest 10. This skill has helped us when using the 'think ten' method when adding and subtracting. We have also managed to squeeze in a few festive activities, including making decorations and rehearsing for our nativity performance! What a busy month we've had!



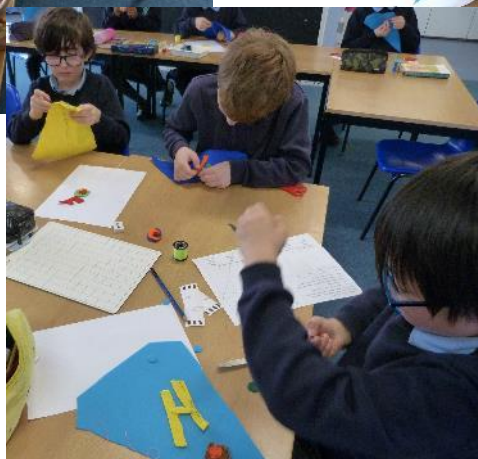
Year 3

In Year 3 we became Egyptians for the day! We were under the reign of Pharaoh Akhenaten and had to create lots of artefacts, like amulet bracelets, canopic jars and perfume, to be presented to the Egyptian Gods. Then in the afternoon, we performed role plays about Egyptian tales and stories. The pictures below show us making our artefacts, presenting it to the gods, and then the role play in the afternoon!



Year 4

In our DT unit, we have been practicing our sewing skills and have designed and created pieces of bunting. It was fiddly cutting out the shapes, however we are very proud at how they are looking.





Year 5

Year 5 enjoyed a visit from History Off the Page, which brought our learning about the Victorian times to life! The day began with the children attending a Victorian school morning, learning handwriting (with an ink pen and pot), Maths (on a slate), spellings and history – they were fully immersed in the school experience of the time.

Later, they played with and made a selection of Victorian toys, looked at a range of artefacts, some needing white gloves to be used - as they were from Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Also, they investigated the suitcases of people who were visiting London at the time of the Diamond Jubilee. It was a fantastic day of learning and discovery!



Year 6



We have had a very busy month.

Last week, we were lucky enough to have a visit from the student nurses at Hertfordshire University. The children learnt all about how to stay healthy through diet and exercise choices and also how to protect themselves in the hot weather. Children were reminded about online safety and the importance of choosing the safest (not quickest) route home.

In Art, we have been studying artwork by L.S. Lowry and techniques he used to create his landscapes e.g. perspective and matchstick men. We created our own landscapes using watercolours inspired by Lowry.



In our Food Technology lessons, we planned and created a WWII-inspired vegetable turnover. We began by taste-testing a variety of vegetables and as a class, decided to include: cabbage, parsnips and leeks. We then practised the bridge and claw technique when chopping vegetables, before making the pastry and constructing our turnover. After baking them, we got to take them home to try with our families - they were delicious!

Finally, to support our learning about WWII, we visited the RAF Museum in Hendon. Here, we looked at all the different aircraft flown during WWII and experienced what life was like for people living on the Home Front. We looked at real life artefacts, tried on pilots' uniforms and even experienced an air raid!





Cost of Living Support

This winter, Hertfordshire County Council wants to make sure that advice and support is available to help every resident deal with the cost of living.

Please follow the link to contact details highlighting advice and services residents can access.



<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/comms-team/campaign-toolkits/cost-of-living/cost-of-living-flash-poster.pdf>

Time To Talk



Negotiation, deliberation, empathy, persuasion and the ability to take turns in conversation are just a few of those skills that are beneficial for all aspects of our lives.

Research shows that children who are supported to develop strong language skills in their earliest years are more likely to succeed in school and work and lead happier lives.

[Literacy Trust: Creating Confident Communicators](#)

Oracy is a hot topic right now—and for good reason. Strong oracy skills are essential for the development of young thinkers, innovators, and communicators. As more educators and parents recognise its impact, oracy is slowly becoming recognised as a cornerstone of learning, helping children express themselves clearly, listen actively, and engage thoughtfully with others.



For early years and primary aged children, oracy education is especially crucial. It forms the foundation of their social and cognitive development, shaping the way they understand the world and interact with others.

Through activities that encourage speaking and listening, children develop the confidence to structure their thoughts, share ideas, ask questions,

and solve problems collaboratively. It also plays a powerful role in the development of writing. These skills aren't just academic—they play a significant role in building empathy, resilience, and self-awareness, which are key to personal and professional success.



Christmas is a great time of year to spend time talking and playing.



Unwanted coats

If you have any children's coats which are no longer required and are of good quality, please bring them into the school office. We will give them to families in need.

Term Time Absence



We are unable to authorise term time holidays.

Term time absence have a negative impact on friendships and learning. Please avoid taking your child out of school.

7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory age attends school.



School Diary

December	
9 th	Reception / KS1 Christmas lunch
9 th	KS2 Church service – children to arrive at 5.30pm
10 th	Mince pie and mingle Nursery Nativity at 9:15am
10 th	KS2 Christmas lunch Please note that on 10 th December, Reception, Years 1 and 2 children will need to bring in a packed lunch from home on Tuesday 10th December.
11 th	Mince pie and mingle Reception Nativity at 9:15am
12 th	Mince pie and mingle Year 1 Nativity at 9:15am
13 th	Mince pie and mingle Year 2 Nativity at 9:15am and 2:15pm
14 th	PTA Christmas Fayre
19 th	Christmas / colourful jumper day Last day of term pupils finish at 12:30pm
Christmas Break	
January	
7 th	First day of term for children
8 th	Parent Forum – Young Carers Policy
16 th	Nursery stay and play sessions begin
21 st	Choir to O2
February	
11 th	Learning Review Meetings 3:30 – 6:10
13 th	Learning Review Meetings 3:30 – 6:10



Commonswood Primary & Nursery School is a Safeguarding School

We are an Encompass School working with external agencies to support children who are victims of domestic abuse.

'All schools have a clear responsibility placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and by guidance from the Department of Education to safeguard the welfare of all their pupils. In doing so schools are expected to consult with Social Services if they believe there is a possibility that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect.'

If you have any concerns about children, please contact 0300 123 4043.

Mrs G Seymour (Designated Safeguarding Lead), Mr S Burt (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), Mrs D Lindsay-Hill (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), Miss K Dean (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Chair of Governors Mrs Julie Noakes



Free Parenting Courses

Disagreements are a normal part of life. How you approach them can make all the difference to you, your co-parent, and your children. Learn skills to navigate changes in your relationships, develop positive communication skills and learn practical steps that you can bring into your child's life to help them cope during and/or after a separation or divorce.

Parenting When Separated: A 6-week group-based course for separated parents that focuses on the emotional impact of separation and supporting communication between co-parents.

Upcoming course dates:

- Online course every Wednesday between 29 Jan - 12 Mar 2025 excluding half term, 10am - 12:30pm
- Face to Face course at The Otley Family Centre, Otley Way, WD19 7TB Every Friday between 17 Jan - 28 Feb 2025 excluding half term, 10am – 1pm

Parenting When Separated Referral Form (hertfordshire.gov.uk)

<https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/5SHI7N/>

Parenting SEN Children Through Separation: A 6-week group-based online course for separated or separating parents and carers of neurodiverse children seeking guidance, support, and strategies for co-parenting more consistently.

Upcoming course dates:

- Monday between 24 Feb - 31 Mar 2025, 7pm - 9pm
- Every Tuesday between 25 Feb - 1 Apr 2025, 9.30am - 11.30am

https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=1v8xmMHAkWkdxzUTU-XK07CPv9ipgBDIY6wX_2Taa1UOEYwWTISNzg2TUpaQVNROFg4M1owR1BQMSQIQCN0PWcu



In partnership with Hertfordshire Council, British Cycling is excited to offer FREE Cycling City Hub and Academy sessions for children across Hertfordshire!

Held at both the Welwyn Gosling Track and St Albans Pump Track, these sessions are the perfect opportunity for students aged 7-14 to build BMX and velodrome cycling skills in a fun, safe environment.

What: Skill-building cycling sessions, BMX and Velodrome skills Who: Confident riders, ages 7-14 When & Where: St Albans Cycle Hub: Tuesdays, 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM , Welwyn Gosling Park: Wednesdays, 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Cost: Free! (Bike rentals available at St Albans; Welwyn riders, please bring your own) New sessions will also be launching soon at The Sele School, Hertford and Edwinstree Middle School, Buntingford.

Don't miss this chance for students to enjoy professional coaching and foster a love for cycling! Sign Up via <https://group.spond.com/SMDKB> (or use code SMDKB if you're already on Spond). For more info, contact Iffat Tejani at cityacademyherts@britishcycling.org.uk



AVA Against Violence and Abuse

A FREE 10 WEEK COURSE SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO HAVE LIVED WITH DOMESTIC ABUSE

COURSE COVERS:

- VALIDATION OF CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES
- SAFETY PLANNING
- UNDERSTANDING ABUSE AND REDUCING SELF-BLAME
- APPROPRIATE VERSUS INAPPROPRIATE EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION

PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF 10 X WEEKLY SESSIONS

DATES:

Tuesday afternoons from 12th November 2024 to 28th January 2025

TIME: 15:30-17:15

To book a place, please contact your child's school for booking information



OUR SCHOOL HAS ACHIEVED THE
LPPA
Leading Parent Partnership Award
Developing positive relationships with parents

2024 - 2027

Accredited by **OPTIMUS EDUCATION**



Are you a family with children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities looking for local activities?

The SEND community activities directory promotes a wide range of local activities and support groups, some activities will also include discounts for families registered on our Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database (HAND).



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/SENDdirectory



Who's in Charge?

A FREE 7 WEEK COURSE FOR PARENTS/CARERS LIVING WITH A STRONG-WILLED CHILD

COURSE COVERS:

- ENTITLEMENT VERSUS RESPONSIBILITY
- CONSEQUENCES
- ANGER
- ASSERTIVENESS
- SELF-CARE
- COOPERATIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF 7 X 2 HOUR WEEKLY SESSIONS

DATES:
Wednesday evenings
6th November - 18th December

TIME: 18:30-20:30

LOCATION: Onslow St. Audrey's school

To book a place, please use the QR code or go to this link:
<https://forms.office.com/e/AjZkxjFeRQ>



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JUST COACHING
ACADEMY

FOOTBALL



WHEN:

~~Monday 23rd~~ December (fully booked) and **Monday 30th** December

Time- 9am to 3pm



WHERE:

Commonswood Primary School



WHO CAN JOIN:

Boys and Girls in **Year 1 to 6**



COST: £25



What's Included?

- **Fun Drills and Challenges**
- **Mini-Tournaments**
- **Skills Development in Passing, Shooting, and More**
- **A Safe and Encouraging Environment**
- **ONLY 32 SPACES AVAILABLE!!**



TO REGISTER OR BOOK:

Contact us at: justcoachingacademy24@gmail.com