

News on the Ninth

May 2025

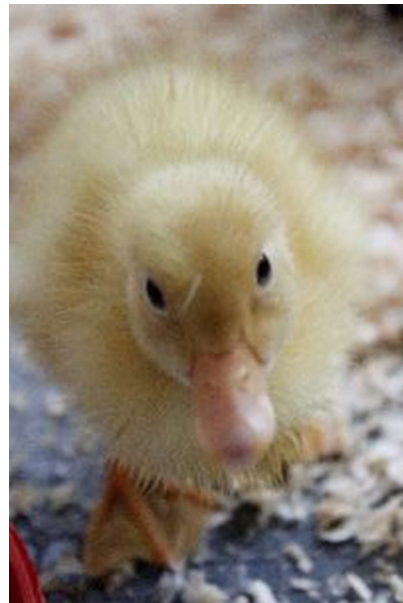
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Welcome to the May edition of our school newsletter! We have plenty to share about all the exciting events which have taken place since our last edition.

Ducklings

As we returned after the Easter break, we welcomed a set of duckling eggs. Within a couple of days, we were joined by 3 healthy ducklings – all different colours. The children thoroughly enjoyed going to visit and hold them. We even watched them paddling in water.



Choir – Royal Albert Hall

On Sunday 23rd March, some Year 5 and 6 children enjoyed the fantastic opportunity to perform at the Royal Albert Hall for the Hertfordshire Gala. The children represented our school beautifully and sung along with many other Primary and Secondary schools, as well as different bands, dancers and musical ensemble groups, including an orchestra. The venue was inspiring and the children sung their hearts out to songs such as 'If I Grow Up - Matilda' and 'Make your own kind of music'. The whole day was a 'once in a lifetime' experience and one that they will hopefully never forget!



Year 5 – Dance Festival

Towards the end of March, children from both year 5 classes took part in a dance festival at the Hawthorn Theatre in Campus West. Both classes worked incredibly hard in the preceding weeks to perfect their dance and on the night performed amazingly.





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

2024 - 2027

qp
Award 2025

Accredited by
OPTIMUS EDUCATION



Year 4 – Great Big Dance Off

On 10th March, Year 4 competed in the Great Big Dance off at Gordon Craig Theatre in Stevenage.

They competed against various schools from around the South of England and finished 7th. For some, it was their first time on a stage performing to a very large audience!

We are very proud of what you achieved and how well you represented the school. A fantastic achievement.



Year 4 - Badminton

On Sunday 6th April, Ted, Oscar, Toby and James competed in the Junior Badminton competition at the University of Hertfordshire.

They played against various schools within the Hertfordshire area and finished 7th.

Well done to all the boys! You were committed, fair and resilient – a great representation of Commonswood School.



Year 5 – Mini Medics

Year 5 became ‘Mini Medics’ at the end of March. Alex, from Williams and Associates UK, spent a day in school running a course where children were taught a range of skills to support in the event of encountering a casualty.

The course included first aid, how to assess a casualty (DRABC – Danger, Response, Airway, Breathing, CPR), how to perform effective CPR on a mannequin and how to put an unresponsive casualty into the recovery position. They were also shown how to access and use a defibrillator in case they were ever in a position where it was required.

All children understood these are important skills to know and feel confident about what to do if this ever occurred.



VE Day



On 8th May, Miss Buckley led an assembly to mark the 80th anniversary of VE day. After sharing some information and historical artefacts, the children sang a song about Glen Miller – a musician whose plane disappeared while travelling to entertain WW2 troops.

Nursery

We have been busy learning about different life cycles. We loved watching the duckling eggs hatch and then were able to hold them. When visiting the orchard, we discovered tadpoles in our pond and have learnt how they become frogs and now our caterpillars have arrived.

We will be watching them grow bigger, form chrysalis and then turn into butterflies. We are also learning the story, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' during Talk 4 Writing.



Reception

Over the last month Reception have been visiting the orchard looking for any pondlife. We have been using the nets and buckets to collect pond water and spotted some tiny tadpoles just before the Easter break.

Since we have returned, we have seen more tadpoles and the children noticed that they have grown! We are very excited to watch how they develop into froglets and eventually frogs.

The children have also loved watching the ducklings hatch out of their eggs!



Year 1

Year 1 went on an exciting trip to Lee Valley. When we were there, the children learnt about what a plant needs to grow, the parts of a plant, seeds, planting and their 5 senses. The children used their scientific knowledge and enquiry by asking questions, grouping and classifying.



Year 2

Year 2 went on a fantastic trip to the Chiltern Open Air Museum, where we studied life in the Victorian times as we are learning about Florence Nightingale in our History lessons.

The children learnt how butter was made, found out about toys and games played in the past and begun to make their own rag rugs. The children had a great day filled with lots of information about life in the Victorian times.



Year 3

We visited the Orchard in Year 3! We had a range of thrilling activities to choose from in the afternoon. Using the natural resources around us, we created animal habitats, nature mobiles and nature art. We can't wait to go back and continue of forest school learning.



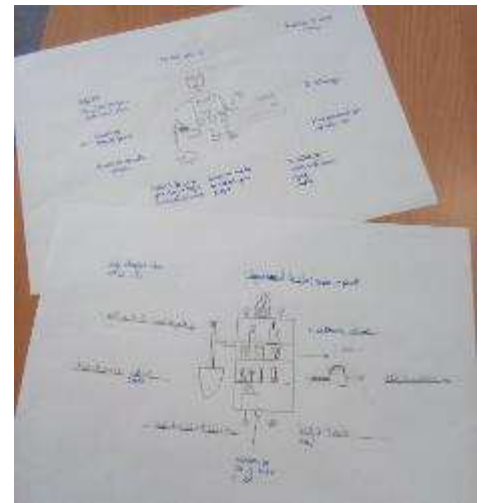
Year 4

Year 4 have continued to show excellent commitment to their learning and have especially enjoyed the wider opportunities available at our school, visiting the library, going on a local walk, learning golf and watching ducklings hatch and grow.



Year 5

In English, Year 5 are focusing on persuasion texts, in particular adverts. We have looked at the features of adverts and discussed the impact they have on the reader. We are now creating a portfolio of persuasive texts for a problem-solving product, beginning with a unique design for a specific problem. This learning will finish with a Dragon's Den style pitch to 'secure investment' for their product.



Year 6

In year 6, we planned, designed and made Aztec masks from clay; following this, we painted them trying to follow our design criteria.





We also started learning about The Maya civilisation. We placed them on a timeline of History and compared their way of life to ours today by analysing secondary sources. At home, we were tasked with making a Maya musical instrument using resources we had; we then used them in our music lessons.

We also organised a 'Health Fair' to teach younger children about ways they could make healthy lifestyle choices and the importance of a balanced diet, good sleep and exercise. We linked this to our science topic and described how the heart is responsible for pumping blood around the body.



Young carers tea party

Our Young carers and friends enjoyed an Easter tea party. It was a time for them to forget their responsibilities and enjoy being themselves. They had lots of fun playing, dancing and eating!



Sports Equality Award

We have been awarded the 'Sport Equality award' in recognition of our outstanding contribution to promoting fairness and inclusion in sports. This award focuses on race equality, gender equality, diversity and inclusion, or other specific areas of equity within the sporting world.

Friends of Commonswood (PTA)

Thank you to everyone who has supported our events this term, the cake sale was a sellout and the quiz night was good fun with a fabulous team of parents from the Acer and Alder classes coming first!





Save the Date:

- Horse racing night - Friday 16th May, from 5pm in school hall - Become a horse owner as well as place small bets on the night for a chance to win. A bar and food will be available on the night, remember to bring coins for betting with (min bet £1)
- Donut sale – Friday 6th June from 310pm in playgrounds
- Summer fair – Saturday 5th July 1pm – 3pm
- Winter Event and laser show – Friday 14th November 5pm onwards

To book tickets for events [PTA Events](#)

Easy ways you can help:

Fund matching – check if the company you work for offers this, no effort for fundraising needed! [Companies Who Match Fund – MoneySavingExpert Forum](#)

Easy fundraising – it's free and once set up reminds you every time you shop online, associated brands will give a donation to the PTA as a thank you for shopping with them. <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>

Sponsorship – we have lots of options for local businesses to support the school and be advertised to over 300 families within the local area – see attached document or contact commonswoodpta@yahoo.com for more information

Fundraising with the Co-op

The Co-op Local Community Fund supports projects across the UK that their members care about. Commonswood School seating area project has been selected for 2024/2025. Please become a member or update your profile to select this project to support [Co-op](#). This can be shared with friends and family across the UK.

We are hoping to create a seating area with planters to provide a peaceful, therapeutic area for the children to relax and socialise in during their break times.

Volunteering:

To make the events possible we do need people to help out, just an hour of your time makes it possible. Look out for the sign-up sheets coming to your class group after the Easter holidays or contact us at commonswoodpta@yahoo.com



Online Safety Theme

May's Online Safety focus is 'Self Image and Identity'. At home, please could you have a discussion with your child regarding this area.

- In EYFS and KS1, it could be discussing what to do if something happens that makes them feel sad, worried, uncomfortable or frightened.
- In Lower KS2, we have been discussing how people can represent themselves in different ways online and not to fully trust everything as how it appears.
- In upper KS2, we have been discussing how to make responsible choices about having an online identity.

TikTok

TikTok is a social media platform that lets you create, share and discover 60 second videos. It is increasingly popular with children but there have been numerous reported problems from parents about children accessing / posting inappropriate content.

If you let your children use TikTok, this 'TikTok safety guide for parents' on this website <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/apps-and-platforms/social-media/tiktok/> has some invaluable advice to how to keep your children as safe as possible.

Anti-abuse curriculum

In order to embed the Anti-Abuse Curriculum into our teaching, each half term we are focusing on one theme which we will discuss in our classrooms during snack and discussion time. This half term, we are focusing on **Body and relationship safety**. Some objectives link closely with our PSHE topic – Relationship. Here are just some of the things we have been discussing across the school:

- I know that I may not touch anyone without their permission (consent)
- I know that no-one has the right to say unkind things to me intended to make me feel bad about myself
- I understand that we cannot like everyone, but we should treat everyone with respect. If I feel I cannot like someone else, I know that does not give me the right to disrespect or abuse them
- I know how to get support if I am in physical danger and can support other people to get help if they are in this situation
- I know that there are parts of my body that are private and should usually only be touched by me or, if I am sick or hurt, by doctors, nurses or parents/carers who I know are trying to make me better (and that this should be witnessed by another person of my choosing)
- I know that no-one should ever expect, pressure or force me to allow them to touch or have photographs of me.
- I know how to say no or how to get help if someone is pressuring me

Emotion of the Month

This half term we are teaching children to understand the emotion of 'Surprise'.

Surprise can be either positive or negative, depending on the context and the individual's interpretation of the situation.

1. Positive Surprise: Surprise can be a positive emotion when it results from something unexpected but enjoyable or beneficial. For example, receiving a thoughtful gift, achieving an unexpected success, or encountering a pleasant surprise can evoke feelings of happiness, excitement, and delight.

2. Negative Surprise: Conversely, surprise can also be negative when it arises from something unexpected and unpleasant or threatening. For instance, receiving bad news, experiencing a sudden loss, or encountering a frightening situation can evoke feelings of shock, fear, or distress.

In both cases, surprise is characterised by a sudden shift in one's expectations or understanding of a situation. Whether it is perceived as positive or negative depends on factors such as personal beliefs, previous experiences, and the specific circumstances surrounding the surprise event.



Think Pharmacy First

Did you know that Pharmacies can now offer NHS clinical appointments with medication available if required for four clinical conditions particularly relevant to school age children? Earache (Children aged 1-17) Sore Throat (over 5s) Infected Insect bites (Over 1s) Impetigo (Over 1s) Visit your local pharmacy for more information. To find a local pharmacy see: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy>

School Diary

May	
12 th – 15 th	Year 6 SATs week
13 th	Reception trip to Aldenham
16 th	PTA Family Race Night
16 th	Year 6 in Orchard - AM
19 th	Class Photos
20 th	Nursery trip to Hertfordshire Zoo
20 th	Local library visit – Year 1 Beech class
21 st	Local Library Visit – Year 1 Birch Class
22 nd	Year 1 Outdoor learning day
23 rd	Staff Inset Day – Children do not attend
26 th – 30 th	Half Term
June	
2 nd – 13 th	Year 3 swimming each day
9 th – 13 th	WOW Writing Week – details to follow
23 rd – 27 th	Year 6 residential trip

27 th	Nursery Sports Day - Morning
July	
1 st	KS2 Sports Day – Morning
1 st	KS1 Sports Day – Afternoon
5 th	PTA Summer Fair
10 th	Transition Day – year 6 pupils attend their secondary school – all children visit their new classrooms.
10 th	Opportunity for parents and children to visit new classroom and see work from current and next year group – after school 3:15pm – 4:30pm
18 th	Year 6 show
21 st	Year 6 – Bell ringing at 9am
22 nd	Year 6 - trip
22 nd	Year 6 – BBQ – 4pm – 6pm
23 rd	Children's last day of term



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



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



WHEN: Tuesday 27th, Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th May
Time- 9am to 3pm

WHERE: Commonswood Primary School

WHO CAN JOIN:
Boys and Girls in Year 1 to 6

COST: £25 per day

What's Included?

- Fun Drills and Challenges
- Mini-Tournaments
- Skills Development in Passing, Shooting, and More
- A Safe and Encouraging Environment

BOOKINGS:
Please book via www.justcoachingacademy.com