



Abbey Court **MATTERS**

Summer Term 6 2025 Issue 391 Circulation 1119





MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNORS



David Field— Partnership Governor

I'm sure many of you will be wondering where the time has gone. I was appointed a Partnership Governor last September, and have been thoroughly impressed by the dedication of the whole school body and parents, to provide the best education for the children and young people. 'We grow people' is not just a statement, but a way of life here.

In June, I had the 'pleasure' of being grilled by staff, which I survived (apart for an unfortunate mix-up between llamas and alpacas), and I was thrilled to describe how impressed I am at the achievements of everyone. I also observed the excellent FE provision provided at Rede Court Road for pupils aged 16-19.

One key theme at this time of year is transition. Whether transferring between school sites, or leaving our school family, change is difficult. To those who are leaving us at the end of term, we wish you happiness and every success for the future.

At the latest Governors' meeting, we reflected on the many wonderful events that occurred this year, which have enriched pupils' experiences. This includes the Autumn Festival, Christmas Market, Christmas Fashion Show, Language of the Term, Gold Rights Respecting School reaccreditation, Carnegie Gold Mental Health reaccreditation, the Community Farm Day, Carols on the Farm, work experience, Toucan Theatre visit, Shakespeare for Schools, Circo Rum Baba visit, Medway Youth Games, car washing and much more. Thank you to everyone involved with these events.

Enjoy the summer, and for those returning, we look forward to seeing you back in September.

This term, the governors:

- ◇ Attended a staff briefing
- ◇ Held a Full Governing Body Meeting, Finance Committee Meeting, and Pay Committee Meeting on 1st July
- ◇ Monitored the Further Education curriculum
- ◇ Monitored the 'Single Central Record'

World Ocean Day

To celebrate 'World Ocean Day', S6 delivered a fact filled assembly to the Secondary Department about why our oceans are important, and the different animals and sea creatures found there.



Pupils learnt all about what they can do to help save our oceans, and make the habitat a better home for marine animals.



Pupils learnt that we can litter pick, recycle different materials, and use less plastic to help the oceans.

Scouts Talent Show



The Scouts have been working really hard towards gaining their Entertainer Award throughout Term 5, and decided to do a talent show.

Each Scout independently chose what talent they would like to do for the show. There were various different talents that were chosen: football skills, magic, singing, dancing, hula hooping and many more.

The Scouts then confidently stood up in front of lots of Secondary and Further Education pupils to perform their acts. There was lots of clapping and cheering at the end of the show, and the Scouts as a whole were given the golden buzzer!

They all did amazingly, and each one of them has now achieved their Entertainer Award. Well done all!!

Family Feast



This Fathers' Day, our school hall was filled with happiness and the delicious aroma of a shared meal, as Key Stage 2 pupils hosted a Family Feast Lunch.

Whether it was dads, mums, stepdads or grandparents, the event was about honouring special family members who play a meaningful role in our children's lives.

Pupils were thrilled to welcome their guests, and decorated their tables with handmade centrepieces and placemats.

Thank you to our wonderful kitchen staff who served up a delicious roast chicken dinner, vegetable wellington and yummy chocolate cake.



Going for Gold



We are thrilled to announce that our school has once again been awarded the **Gold Award for Mental Health and Wellbeing** by the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools!

This prestigious recognition reflects our commitment to nurturing a supportive, inclusive, and mentally healthy environment for all pupils, staff, and families. The assessor praised our school for its whole-school approach, strong leadership, and the genuine care shown by staff and students alike.

We are incredibly proud of this achievement and grateful to every member of our school community who has contributed to making our school a place where wellbeing really matters.

Our next steps are to work with Carnegie to share our excellent practice with other schools striving to achieve gold.



Abbey Court School – Parent Survey Highlights 2024–2025

We are pleased to share the results of this year's Parents Survey, which reflect the strong partnership between families and Abbey Court School. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond.

What You Told Us

- 99% of parents say their child is happy at school.
- 98% feel their child is safe and well cared for.
- 100% believe their child is doing well at Abbey Court.
- 98% feel informed about what their child will learn.
- 99% find school meetings useful and informative.
- 98% feel the school promotes their child's rights.
- 99% believe the school listens to and acts on pupils' views.

Please contact the school office if you would like a full copy of the survey.



Learning about Spices



P2 have had a great school year, learning through a range of experiences both inside and outside the classroom.

We have been on lots of Educational Visits to support our learning.

One of our favourites was going to a restaurant called Spice Fusion in Parkwood, where the owner opened especially for us to come and explore spices put in the food. We explored the different spices, by smelling and touching them, and tasting some.

Once back at school, we explored the spices we put in rice, and made different flavoured rice.



Parkwood Youth Club

One of the favourite activities in the Further Education department is the weekly visit to Parkwood Youth Club.

Across the course of the year, a group of students have been enjoying a variety of different activities that the Youth Club staff provide. This has included table tennis, construction, board games, basketball, hula hooping and art. However, the most favoured activities each week are playing games of pool, as well as Mario Kart and Minecraft on the Xbox in the gaming room!

Students look forward to continuing their visits next year.



★ Carnival ★ Spectacular

On 10th of July, Year 6 celebrated finishing their primary education, by having a carnival.

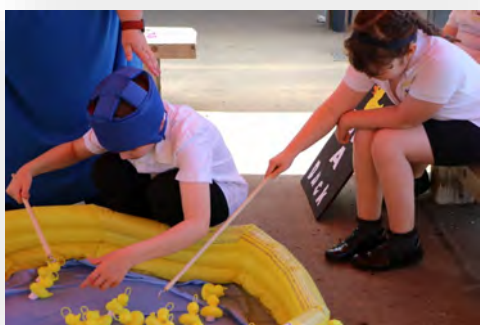


Pupils designed a range of stalls, such as 'hook a duck', ring toss, the selfie area and bean bag throwing. Pupils also worked hard in the weeks prior to the carnival to earn 'Abbey Court Dollars', which could be spent on the day.

The pupils enjoyed playing the games with their peers, dancing along to the disco, and eating ice cream at the ice cream stall!



Well done Year 6, and good luck in your secondary education.



Parent Coffee Morning

The EAL Parent Coffee Morning was held on 14th May, with the discussion topic being 'the importance of the home language in a child's education'. Parents discussed how important it is to use and celebrate the home language for a child's all round development.



Parents gave some positive feedback about EAL events and resources that the school offered. We also planned next academic year's topics for Coffee Mornings.

Thank you to everyone for coming.



Every local council must provide a 'Local Offer', which is a directory of support available for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with SEND, as well as their families.

The Medway SEND information hub provides information and advice about education, health and social care services in the area. To find out more, visit: <https://www.medway.gov.uk/localoffer>

Short Breaks

A short break is for children and young people with disabilities to take part in enjoyable activities outside of school, and can range from one hour to several days.

The Short Break Grant scheme is available to parents and carers of children with a disability. It's paid annually, and can be used to help pay for a personal assistant, play schemes or specialist equipment.

For more information, visit:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200307/special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_send_information_hub/1927/short_break_self-assessment

FE Fundraising



Students in the Further Education Department have been working hard during their enterprise events to raise money for an end of year barbeque and Leavers' Party. Recent enterprise events have included a car wash and raffle.

Over the course of 5 days, students cleaned a large number of cars inside and out, having great fun throughout!

The FE Raffle was a huge success, with four large hampers up for grabs along with sixteen smaller prizes. Students helped to draw the names from the ticket box and then delivered the hampers and prizes to the winners. Congratulations to all of the winners!

Students and staff in the Further Education department would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported our enterprise events this year!

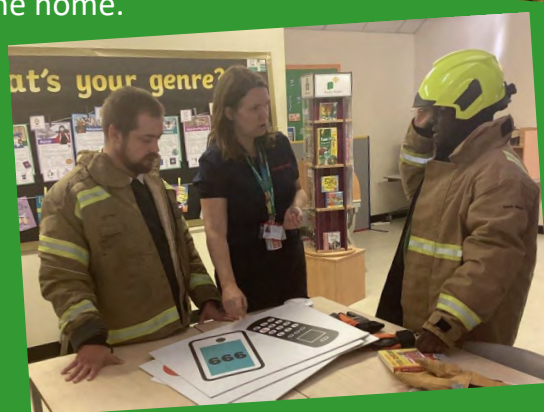


Learning about Firefighters



Students in the Further Education department have been exploring the career of being a firefighter.

They were able to enjoy trying on the uniform, as well as exploring the different roles firefighters have within the service, how to call the emergency services, and learning about testing smoke alarms within the home.



Period Products

Periods are a natural part of life, but for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), managing menstruation can present unique challenges. Ensuring that all young people have access to the right period products—and the support they need to use them confidently—is a vital step toward inclusion, dignity, and wellbeing in schools.



Not all period products work for everyone. Pupils with sensory sensitivities may prefer organic cotton pads while others may benefit from reusable options that feel more secure.



Period underwear and/or swimwear is an alternative option that is gaining popularity, and may be an option that works for young people with SEND.



Providing a variety of products allows pupils to find what works best for them.

Please contact Claire Wilson (PSHE Lead) via office@abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk, if you require any more information.

Help with Toilet Training

The 'ERIC' website has tips and tools to help with toilet training. To find out more, please visit eric.org.uk/all-aboard-the-toilet-train-get-ready-for-school



S1 have worked towards achieving a 'First Aid AQA Award' during the term.

They explored the classroom first aid boxes, and labelled the items they wanted to put in their first aid boxes.

Some pupils have read first aid scenarios, and undertaken the medical treatment to help the injured person. In addition, pupils have watched a video of how to clean a wound before putting on a plaster.



Pupils have also had the opportunity to explore and use dental equipment and teeth cleaning items, to provide them with some idea of other medical professionals that they may encounter.

Some super engagement and learning throughout. The class really enjoyed the role play opportunities during the learning.

Well done, everyone!



ABBHEY COURT TRUST



Abbey Court School Charitable Trust supports and fundraises for the school and community. Our current fundraising efforts are focused on raising money to maintain and develop Larkin Farm. Our goal this year is to raise more than £14,000. Please get in touch if you can help us to achieve this.

Larkin Farm Amazon Wish List



When you're next on Amazon, please consider purchasing a gift for our furry and feathered friends on the farm. There are both essentials and treats for our furry and feathered friends on the farm.

Scan the QR code or click on the link to find our more.

<https://amzn.eu/a1GEacq>



We would like to thank

- ◆ Everyone who donated to our 'Sponsored Move Week'.
- ◆ Woodlands Garden Centre, for their donation of a lawnmower
- ◆ Lloyds of London, for giving their time to complete a range of jobs on the farm.

We look forward to:

- ◆ Working with Wickes next term on an exciting project!



Going the extra mile for Abbey Court Trust!

Anneka Shaw has signed up to run the Brighton Marathon in April 2026, and she will be doing it all in aid of Abbey Court Trust.

Please support her by visiting:

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/annekashawmarathon



A Message from Christine Fryers of Abbey Court Trust

I have just become a Trustee of your amazing school, and hope to bring lots of new ideas to the board.

I have a grown-up son and daughter, three granddaughters, and a young grandson with special needs. I love crafts, my dogs and music. I'm a member of the Medway Singers and have recently joined Rock Choir, which is great fun. In 2023, I felt I needed a new challenge. I love animals, so decided to volunteer at Larkin Farm. The farm crew welcomed me in, and the fresh air, hard work and lots of cuddles with the animals helped me gain a sense of purpose again.

Registered Charity Number: 1160511

Cycling Theme Day

To mark the exciting start of the **Tour de France**, pupils and students across Abbey Court took part in a vibrant **Cycling Theme Day on 4th July**. The day was packed with activities designed to promote cycling awareness, safety, and fitness:



- **Cycling Safety:** Pupils learned how helmets protect us, and why safety gear is essential.
- **Hands-On Riding:** From trikes to supported bike rides, everyone had a chance to get moving.
- **Bike Mechanics:** Students explored different parts of a bike and how they work.
- **Bike Shop Visits:** A real-world look into cycling gear and maintenance.
- **Fitness Focus:** Static bikes helped students understand the link between cycling and health.
- **Creative Expression:** Pupils created posters celebrating the Tour de France, and what cycling means to them.



The day was a wonderful celebration of movement, teamwork, and learning, all inspired by one of the world's greatest sporting events.



164

8

139

Trust Lottery Draw

148

121

169

**9th Trust
Lottery Draw
on
23rd May 2025:**



**First prize of £40 — Sue Williams
Second prize of £20 - Graham Jenner
Third prize of £10 — Rosanne Paine**



**10th Trust
Lottery Draw
On
27th June 2025:**

**First prize of £40 — Laurence Taylor
Second prize of £20— Marilyn Pawley
Third prize of £10— Ginny Wilson**

Congratulations to all of the lucky winners!

Farm Day Challenge

On Tuesday 17th June, all pupils in the school took part in a farm challenge. Each key stage had their own challenge, with classes displaying their entries for the farm staff to judge.

It was very exciting, as all the title entries were from external competitions; Kent County Show and Strood Gardening Club. The entries that got placed 1st by our judges then went on to be entered into the external competitions.

All classes were very creative, which made the fantastic entries difficult to judge. The winning classes received a 1st, 2nd or 3rd rosette to display in their classes.

Well done everyone!

EYFS & Key Stage 1 –
Decorate a welly with a nature or farm animal theme.



Lower Key Stage 2 —
Create an animal or a nature sculpture from paper mâché.



Upper Key Stage 2 –
Create an animal painting or drawing on canvas.



Key Stage 3 –
Create a farmyard with something growing



Key Stage 4 -
Create a smiling sun collage

Key Stage 5 –
Take the perfect photograph



A Blooming Success at Strood Gardening Club!

Every year, Strood Gardening Club invite us to their annual school competition. This year, there were two categories: 'Create a Farmyard Incorporating Something Growing' and 'A Smiling Sun Collage'.



Congratulations to S8 and S9 who came 1st and 2nd for creating their amazing sun collages! Congratulations also go to S4, S5 and S6 for their creative 'Farmyards with something growing in it' entries. They came 1st, 2nd, and 'Highly Commended' in this category. Classes received a presentation cup, certificates, medals and some prize money.

Thank you to Strood Gardening Club for giving us this opportunity. The pupils had great fun taking part!



Primary Sports Day

On Tuesday 10th June, Primary pupils took part in a fun filled Sports Day.

Events included a wheelchair slalom event, sensory relay, shotput, javelin, and tennis ball balancing - ensuring every child had the opportunity to participate and shine.

At the end of the event, pupils proudly received a medal and certificate to recognize their efforts and achievements.



Secondary Sports Week

In June, secondary pupils and Further Education students took part in their Sports Week. As part of this, they tried different sporting events every day, such as basketball, cycling, spiderball and swimming.

In addition to this, each class produced a poster about a famous British sports person. This included the cyclist Laura Kenny, rugby player Jonny Wilkinson, and football player Lucy Bronze.

Everyone had a great time trying new activities and getting active.



Sponsored Move Week

This term, pupils across the whole school undertook a 'Sponsored Move Week' to raise money for Abbey Court Trust.

Everyone could get involved, as pupils were given their own personal challenges to do a different movement each day. Some pupils completed the Daily Mile, whilst others used their walkers to deliver messages.

Classes competed against each other to move the most. The winning Primary class was P2, who moved for a total of 1629 minutes across the week. S9 moved the most out of Secondary and Further Education, moving for a grand total of 1665 minutes over the week.



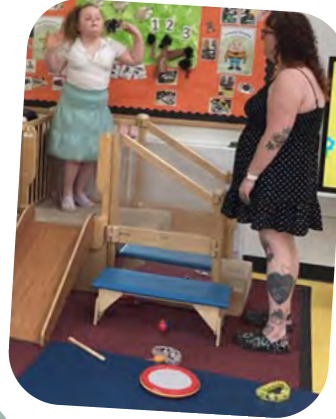
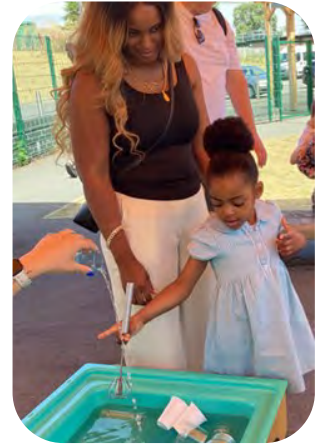
It was a great week of movement which raised a total of £773.50 for the Abbey Court Trust. Well done everyone!



Stay and Play

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classrooms were buzzing with excitement, as we welcomed families to our much-anticipated **Stay and Play** session.

The event offered a wonderful opportunity for parents and carers to step into their children's world, and experience first-hand the magic of early learning through play. There were smiles all round as bubbles, water and sand were explored together.



Stay to Tea

Pupils in Key Stage 1 were excited to stay behind for our '**Stay to Tea**' event, held after school. It was a wonderful opportunity to unwind, enjoy a light meal together, and spend quality time with friends and staff in a relaxed setting.

Whether it was meeting the sheep, playing games, or simply unwinding after a busy day, there was lots of fun and smiles, helping to build a stronger sense of friendship, community and belonging.

Thank you for supporting these events: they really do make a difference.



Ewe-phoric weekend at the Kent County Show!



From 4th to 6th July, Abbey Court School and District Young Farmers Club attended the Kent County Show. Club members showcased Larkin Farm's lambs, goats, rabbits, guinea pigs and chickens. Members also entered a range of craft competitions—highlighting their talents in drawing, baking, needlework, decorating wellies, and even making jams and pickles!

Club members worked hard in the lead up to the show, preparing the animals, learning about each animal, and getting show-ready. The Young Farmers represented Medway and our school community with great enthusiasm, walking away with an incredible 48 rosettes! They were placed 9th out of 14 competing clubs in Kent, and also received a trophy for being the most helpful club during the setup of the Young Farmers area.

Abbey Court School pupils also attended the first day to support their classmates. They had a fantastic time learning about agriculture, including sheep shearing, exploring the world of mini beasts and reptiles, and comparing animal breeds—particularly those different from the ones at Larkin Farm. They also visited land-based education stands, such as those hosted by Hadlow College and Plumpton College.

Thank you to everyone that attended, and a huge well done to the Young Farmers Club for all their hard work!





Abbey Court School Trust

Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP
Telephone: 01634 338220 / Website:
www.abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk

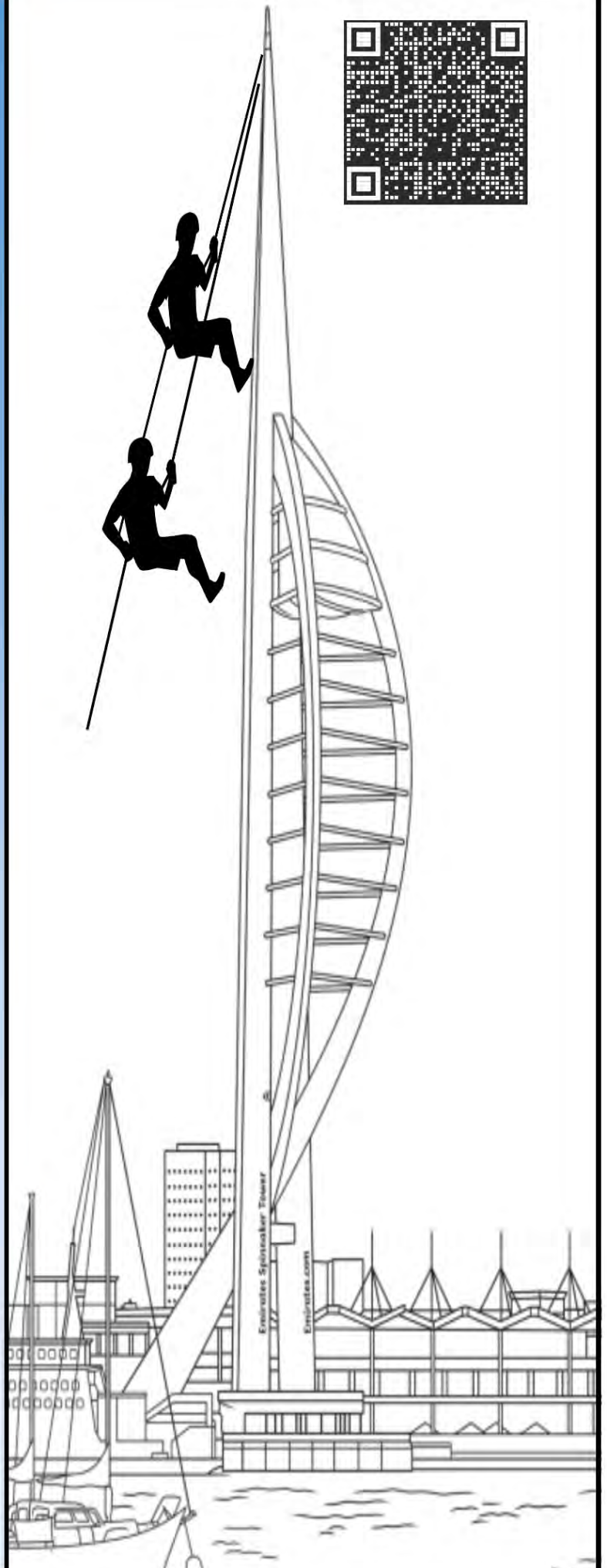
On Saturday, July 26th, 2025, two dedicated individuals, Abbey Court trustee and School Chaplain Sue Vallente-Kerr, and Jade Goodwin, will be abseiling down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth to raise funds for Abbey Court School Charitable Trust and St Nicholas Church.

Your donation, no matter the amount, can make a meaningful difference. If you wish to contribute, please scan the QR code provided above. Your support will be greatly appreciated and will help make a positive impact on the lives of those in need within the community.

Abbey Court School Charitable Trust is actively engaged in fundraising efforts aimed at sustaining and enhancing the school's farm, which plays a vital role in both education and community engagement.

Meanwhile, St Nicholas Church is dedicated to supporting children, young people, and the local community through initiatives like their community larder, which aids families who fall outside the traditional food bank criteria.

Your contributions will greatly benefit these important initiatives.



- Free places available for children eligible for benefit related free school meals
- Free places available for children that are in care, from military families or children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)
- Plus paid places on selected activities

FOLLOW THESE 3 EASY STEPS TO ACCESS MEDWAYGO ACTIVITIES

STEP 1

Check you are eligible. If you are receiving benefit related free school meals this makes you automatically eligible. If you are not in receipt of benefit related free school meals but think you may be eligible for them, please apply via the medway.gov.uk website. If you believe you are eligible for any other reason please email go@medway.gov.uk.

STEP 2

Once you have confirmed your eligibility, you can explore activities and book your place via the website (during booking periods).

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

football, tennis, karate, trampolining, dance, theatre, swimming, outdoor pursuits, arts and crafts and so much more

STEP 3

If eligibility is confirmed your booking will be approved. Paid places may also be available to book for non-eligible children.

All staff and volunteers are experienced and DBS checked, providing peace of mind for you and lots of fun for your kids!

DISCOVER 100'S OF FREE ACTIVITIES DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



MedwayGO

FREE ACTIVITIES DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

MedwayGO
FREE ACTIVITIES DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

READY WHEN YOU ARE!
GO.MEDWAY.GOV.UK

MedwayGO
A BETTER MEDWAY
Essex ways to be healthy
Serving You

go@medway.gov.uk

Find out more





Communication Corner



Here are some easy things that you can do to develop communication skills over the summer holidays.

Build a child's vocabulary with these types of words:

- ◆ **Core Words** - such as 'more', 'stop', 'help', 'different', 'look', 'want', 'like', 'don't like'.
- ◆ **Nouns** - the names of things, such as foods and animals.
- ◆ **Verbs** - action words such as 'kick', 'eat' and 'walk'.
- ◆ **Names** - such as family members and pets.
- ◆ **Social words** - greetings such as 'hi' and 'bye'.



Lynsey Cook

Kelly Ann Ralph

All these words are useful because children can use them to name things, make requests and add a comment.

Strategies that you can try at home:

- ◆ **Naming:** Name different actions or objects during play and daily routines so that your child learns the names of things around them.
- ◆ **Commenting:** Talk about what you and your child are doing, looking at, playing with, touching or eating. Use short phrases and repeat the key words.
- ◆ **Following their lead:** Talk about, and play with the things your child is playing with. Respond to your child's interactions and interests. Model or copy your child's actions, words, or sounds.
- ◆ **Copy and add:** If your child has started to use single words, you can build their vocabulary by repeating back what they have said and adding another word.
- ◆ **Say it again and again:** Children learn best with repetition. Repeat key words over and over again during play and daily routines, such as, "Up, up, up the stairs".

Thickener

Thickener only lasts for 4 weeks once opened, so any we have in school will expire over the Summer holidays.

If your child needs thickener in their drinks, **please send in a new tin for the first day in September.**



Fancy ice lollies this summer?

RESOURCE THICKEN UP CLEAR works great in lolly moulds, as it can be frozen once made up, and will defrost back to its original thickness.



Siblings Page

Summer Colour by Number



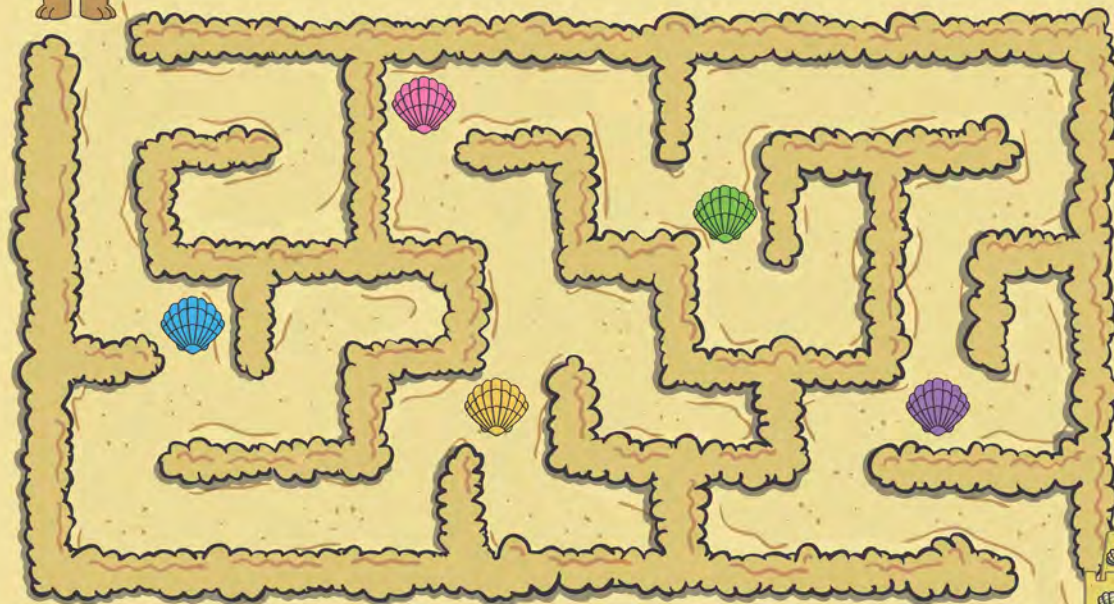
- 1 =
 - 2 =
 - 3 =
 - 4 =
 - 5 =
 - 6 =
 - 7 =
- skin tone of your choice



Collecting Shells Maze Challenge



Can you help Teddy to collect all of the shells to decorate the sandcastle?



Can you find all of the shells?

-
-
-
-
-



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF!



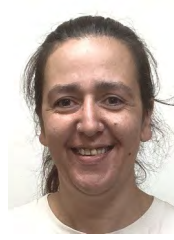
Laura Lorton— Catering Assistant

I spend a lot of my time with my two little boys, and love travelling.



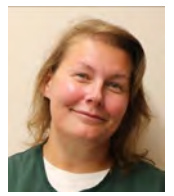
Marina Neto— Cleaner

I am a mum of three, which takes up a lot of my time. I also enjoy baking and fishing.



Debbie Peters— Cleaner

I love all things arty and creative. In my spare time, you will find me doing an art project and jamming to music.



Goodbye to Paul Sears— Site Manager

On behalf of the school community, we bid a fond farewell to our much-loved Site Manager, Paul Sears, who is retiring this term.



We are sorry to say goodbye to Jo Dawson, Office Manager, and Alicia Gravenell, Cleaner. We wish you well for the future.

Since joining our school community nearly three decades ago, Paul has been a constant presence—ensuring our school runs smoothly and safely every single day. His commitment, reliability, and jovial character have left a lasting impression on staff, students, and families alike.

One of Paul's most significant contributions was his instrumental role in the development of our purpose-built school building. His hands-on involvement, attention to detail, and unwavering dedication helped turn a vision into a reality—creating a space that continues to inspire learning and growth for generations to come.

On behalf of the entire school community, we extend our deepest thanks to Paul for his years of hard work, care, and loyalty.



Goodbye to Danny Stewart— Network Manager

After 20 years of outstanding service, we say a heartfelt thank you and farewell to our Network Manager, Danny Stewart, as he retires from his role.



Throughout two decades of rapid technological change, Danny has been the steady hand behind the scenes—ensuring that staff and students alike could rely on a technology within the school every day.

From major infrastructure upgrades to login issues, Danny has handled it all with professionalism. His knowledge, dedication, and good humour will be missed.

We are incredibly grateful for everything Danny has contributed to our school community and wish him a retirement filled with joy, relaxation, and exciting new adventures.



Term Dates

Tuesday 22nd July	Last day of term
Wednesday 23rd July to Friday 29th August	Summer Break
Monday 1st September and Tuesday 2nd September	Staff Training Days—no pupils
Wednesday 3rd September	Pupils return to school