

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a fantastic half-term it has been! The children have shown great enthusiasm and commitment to their learning, and it's wonderful to see them embracing every opportunity. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and catching up on the exciting activities and achievements they've experienced so far.

As we look forward to next half-term, we're excited to see even more progress in the lead-up to Christmas and all the festive celebrations. With the weather turning colder and often unpredictable, please ensure your child comes to school dressed warmly and prepared for the season.

Please find the highlights of the term so far!

### Nursery

We were delighted to welcome new children and their families to the school. They have settled well and are becoming increasingly more familiar with being in a learning environment. Our learning has focused on making relationships, establishing routines and encouraging independence. The children learnt a poem for Poetry Day called Chop, Chop, Choppity Chop. To make the poem come to life, the children chopped apples and made their own apple crumbles.



We have had lots of hands-on exploration both indoors and out. We have been on a Bear Hunt, rolled conkers in paint and played imaginatively in the new 'construction site'.

The children have learnt new vocabulary through sharing stories and rhyme bags and created artwork linked to our core text 'Mole in a Black and White Hole' by Tereza Sediva.



We have lots of exciting things planned for the second half of the Autumn term and it's definitely a magical season in so many ways. Our topic will start by exploring the autumnal changes and learning about annual celebrations.

## Reception

Reception have had a fantastic start to school. The children settled very quickly into the routines of the class and have enjoyed learning so many different things. This topic we have focussed on our school community, learning the names of the adults around the school and everyone's important roles too. We also spent time exploring different jobs within the community and learnt all about people who help us.



We have started our phonics lessons and have already learnt all of the first set of sounds! Now we are concentrating on blending those sounds into words. Next half term, we will be exploring Autumn as well as learning about different celebrations that happen in Autumn and Winter.



## Year 1

We are delighted to share what a fantastic start we've had in Year 1 this half term. The children have settled into their new classrooms so well and are becoming familiar with the change of routines. It has been wonderful to see them adapt and engage with their learning with such enthusiasm.

Throughout the term, we have enjoyed participating in a wide range of structured lessons, including Science, DT, Music, Religious Education, and Geography. Each subject has brought new opportunities for the children to explore, learn and grow.

A particular highlight was our walk around the local area of Newport Pagnell. This outing was not only a fun adventure, but also an important part of our Geography learning, helping the children to identify human features such as shops, roads and bridges. The walk also tied in with our Science topic on the seasons, as we observed the changes happening in nature around us.





### Year 2

In DT, Year 2 made healthy wraps as part of our nutrition and cooking unit. We learned about the different food groups and how they help our body. We then designed, made and evaluated our wraps at a Teddy Bears' Picnic with a story and a chat.



### Year 3

In RE, we have been learning about gratitude and how this is demonstrated within different religions. After learning about Harvest festivals around the world, Year 3 looked at the Hindu practice of Puja, which is a form of worship. Having learnt about the key

elements of Puja, the children were able to experience what this worship might look, smell and feel like, whilst also discussing how it shows thanks and gratitude.



### Year 4

Year 4 have been working hard in DT this half term to test, design and make a product including a fastening.

First, the children looked at a range of products to find the fastenings that were used, they then discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each of them. From their research, the children designed their own book cover/pouch and selected a fastening they would like to use to keep their book covered. The children used their sewing skills from last year and progressed to adding a button, zip, toggle or push stud. They were very pleased with the final results and enjoyed testing if their books would fit inside.

### Year 5

Year 5 have taken part in some exciting practical activities this half term. In DT they began by looking at the ingredients in a bolognese sauce and making changes to a basic recipe to make it their own. Lots of children had eaten or even cooked it before and were able to make

suggestions about to what they wanted to add in or take out. We certainly had some excellent suggestions including adding more herbs, bacon and even red wine! The children showed their excellent cutting skills in preparing the ingredients and all had a taste test - although not everyone enjoyed the finished product!

We also learned how to code a micro:bit to react to certain temperatures and build Lego 'housing' units for the bits.



### Oliver

Year 6 were lucky to be invited to Ousedale School for their performance of Oliver! It was fabulous to see some of our past students and have a little sing along.

### School Council Elections



Our School Council elections have taken place. The children were able to put their names down for one of three causes: charity, community or environment.

Children in Key Stage 2 made speeches to their peers, explaining why they should represent the school. The children voted using ballot cards, placed them into boxes and the results were counted.

The School Council for 2024-2025 is:

Year 1 Representatives - Rhys and Elise

Year 2 Representatives - Emma and Ralphie

Community Representatives - Annabelle and Tilly

Charity Representatives - Sara and Esmee

Environment Representatives - Phoebe and Esme



### National Poetry Day

On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, we celebrated National Poetry Day across the school from Nursery to Year 6. Each key stage enjoyed a special poem linked to this year's theme 'counting'. We had a brilliant day sharing and enjoying

different poems together. Have a look at our website for some of the lovely examples of written and performance poetry the children completed on that day.

## Mental Health Day



On Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October, Cedars took part in World Mental Health Day. Our 'Hello Yellow' theme saw lots of children and staff come to school wearing yellow and we all took the time to think about our own and others' mental well-being. So far we have raised £148 and there is still time to donate if you are able to: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/cedar-s-primary-school-helloyellow24>

## MKPSAA Cross Country Championship

On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October, the Cross Country Team met at Milton Keynes Rugby Club ready to take part in the schools' cross country competition. We had runners in all four categories - junior boys and girls as well as senior boys and girls. All the children had been training hard during the weekly sessions at Bury Field, and were ready to race with a mixture of nerves and excitement.

They were a credit to Cedars and should be very proud of their achievements! Mya in Year 4 received a silver medal along with Leah in Year 3 who received the bronze. Phoebe in Year 4 was the third scoring runner in the junior girls' team and with such a low combined total of places they achieved a bronze medal in the overall junior girls' competition - a first for Cedars! Grit and determination

came in the junior boys' race with two Year 3 boys Caleb and Avery representing the school for the first time - they did not give up and ran brilliantly.

In the senior girls' competition, Sara finished in second place winning herself the silver medal and Erin, who had whizzed across from her football match ran a fantastic race, finishing in 14<sup>th</sup> place. The day concluded with the senior boys' race involving Charlie, Zak, Harvey, Lucas, Addison and Oliver. The support for one another during the race was fantastic to see, and all the boys ran superbly!



## Harvest Festival



It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Harvest Festival. Thank you for your generosity in aid of the Milton Keynes Food Bank. We know that your donations will go directly to helping many families in need of support.

Also thank you to Lovat Hall for letting us hold our assembly there and the PTFA for serving refreshments.

### Year 6 Standon Bowers Residential

Year 6 had an unforgettable adventure at Standon Bowers! They embraced the challenge of caving in the rain, scaled climbing walls and bravely took the leap of faith. The children showcased their creativity in bushcraft, constructing shelters and testing their waterproofing abilities.

They worked collaboratively to build bridges over water with limited resources—only a few brave souls ended up in the water! Of course, the highlight was gathering around the fire they had made to toast marshmallows. Their enthusiasm, perseverance, resilience, and teamwork were truly commendable, and we couldn't be prouder of their achievements.



### Playground equipment

We kindly remind you that while our school's trim trail, climbing frame and fitness equipment are a wonderful resource, it is important that children are supervised by an adult when using them outside of school hours. The school does not take responsibility for any accidents or injuries that may occur during this time on this equipment.

### Attendance

#### Attendance Matters



#### Every Day Counts....

We have been positively promoting and celebrating attendance in school this half term. Each week, the class with the highest attendance receives a certificate during the Celebration Assembly. We will be continuing to do this throughout the year, and appreciate your ongoing support regarding attendance.

### Parents' Evening



If you have not yet done so, please book a Parents' Evening appointment:

- 12<sup>th</sup> November 3:30pm-6:00pm
- 13<sup>th</sup> November 3:30pm-7:00pm

At Parents' Evening your child's class teacher will provide you with an oral summary of the following:

- ✚ how your child has settled into their new year and class
- ✚ your child's personal, social and emotional development
- ✚ how well your child is achieving in Reading, Writing and Maths
- ✚ how you can help your child further at home

### Free School Meals

If you are receiving certain benefits, a FREE tasty and nutritious school meal is available for your children at Cedars Primary School. You could be eligible even if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 and receiving Universal Free School meals.

The benefits of registering for Free School Meals are:

- A free school meal for your child, which is good for their health and could help their learning
- Savings for you, worth over £420 a year
- Extra money for the school through Pupil Premium, worth at least £900 a year

Remember, just registering your child for Free School Meals means that Cedars Primary School receives the extra money even if you don't take up the free meal. No one will know you have registered and it will not affect any other benefits you are claiming.

If you would like further information then please talk to Mrs Swannell (School Secretary) or email her at [office@cedars.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:office@cedars.milton-keynes.sch.uk).

Everything you say will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Checking whether you qualify and registering is really quick and easy - do it online at:

<https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims/>

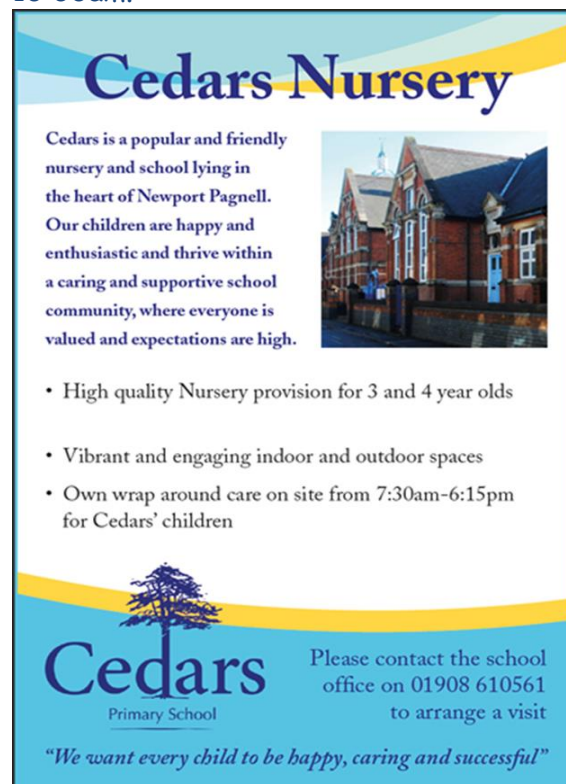
*Please note that if you have an older child who is currently receiving Free School Meals, you still need to apply for any younger children.*

### Nursery and Reception Open Days

We will be holding Open Days for both Nursery and for children starting school in September 2025. Please see below for further information:

#### Nursery

Our Nursery Open Morning will be taking place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 10:00am.



**Cedars Nursery**

Cedars is a popular and friendly nursery and school lying in the heart of Newport Pagnell. Our children are happy and enthusiastic and thrive within a caring and supportive school community, where everyone is valued and expectations are high.

- High quality Nursery provision for 3 and 4 year olds
- Vibrant and engaging indoor and outdoor spaces
- Own wrap around care on site from 7:30am-6:15pm for Cedars' children

**Cedars**  
Primary School

Please contact the school office on 01908 610561 to arrange a visit

*"We want every child to be happy, caring and successful"*

## Reception



*"We want every child to be happy, caring and successful."*

### Reception 2025 Intake Prospective Parent Tours


- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 – 1:30pm
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 - 9.30am & 10.30am

*\*if these times are not convenient, please contact us to arrange a different time.*



Are you currently considering a reception place for your child?  
The staff team and children would be very proud to welcome you.

*"Adults and pupils share high expectations for work and behaviour"*



*"Pupils thrive at Cedars Primary School."*  
May 2021

Cedars Primary School, Bury Street, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0DT  
01908 610561 office@cedars.milton-keynes.sch.uk  
www.cedars.milton-keynes.sch.uk

Please feel free to share this information with family and friends.

## Reading

At Cedars Primary School we prioritise reading. We are determined that every pupil will learn to read. We believe that reading is one of the most important life skills and that the ability to read is key to success in education and the wider world.

We wanted to share the quote and facts below with you:

"There can be few things as powerful as regularly reading to your child. It has astonishing benefits for children: comfort and reassurance, confidence and security, relaxation, happiness and fun. Giving a child time and full attention when reading them a story tells them they matter. It builds self-esteem,

vocabulary, feeds imagination and even improves their sleeping patterns." (National Literacy Trust)

## THE MILLION WORD GAP

New research shows the different numbers of words kids will have heard by age 5 based on how often parents read to them:

- Never read to: 4,662 words
- 1-2 times per week: 63,570 words
- 3-5 times per week: 169,520 words
- Daily: 296,660 words
- Five books a day: 1,483,300 words



## And finally ...

Thank you for your support this half term. We wish you a lovely half term break. We look forward to welcoming you back to Cedars Primary School and Nursery on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024.**

Kind regards

Mrs Goldsmith