

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a busy start to the academic year it's been! We are delighted to welcome our new families in Nursery, Reception and across the school. We are very proud of how well all of the children have settled back into school life and embraced their learning.

There is always so much going on here at Cedars, below is just a little taster and some of the highlights of our term so far....

### **Nursery**

Our half term started with meeting many of our new children in their homes. It has been a privilege to get to know you all, and the children have made a fantastic start to Nursery life. They have quickly picked up new routines and are making new friends.

Our learning has focused on 'who lives in your house' - the children have enjoyed painting and drawing pictures to represent themselves, family members and even their pets.

We have done lots of cooking; icing face biscuits, chopping apples to make apple crumble, making pizzas and kneading bread to make hedgehog bread rolls.

Another highlight of this half term was our Listening Walk. The children explored the wider school collecting sounds to put in our sound box. They practiced listening and attention skills whilst identifying sounds in the environment.

Singing is an important part of our Nursery sessions. The children have joined in with songs and rhymes including 'Pull a funny face' and 'Zooming to the moon'.



### **Reception**

We are so proud of how well the children have settled into Reception this term. It's been a pleasure to see their smiling faces each morning, the lovely friendships forming, and their growing independence in both indoor and outdoor learning. Our topic 'Me and My Community' has been a brilliant way to explore the roles of people who help us. The children were excited to meet visitors from the police and fire service.



They loved trying on uniforms and seeing real equipment like torches, cameras, handcuffs and a baton. A highlight for them was having a police car on the school playground, hearing the sirens and seeing the flashing lights.

The children have also enjoyed bringing in and sharing their special objects from home. It was wonderful to hear them answering some questions and telling their friends all about them. We were particularly impressed with how well they performed their poem during the Harvest assembly. It's been wonderful to see their phonics and maths skills developing so well already. Thank you for your continued support at home, especially with reading and sharing books together - it really does help.

### Year 1

We are delighted to share what a fantastic start we've had in Year 1 this half term! The children have settled in so well and are becoming increasingly familiar with the new routines. It has been wonderful to see them adapt and engage with their learning with such enthusiasm. Throughout the term, we have enjoyed taking part in a wide range of lessons including Science, Design and Technology, Music, Religious Education,

and Geography. Each subject has provided new opportunities for the children to explore, learn and grow. A particular highlight was part of our geography learning, we went on a walk around the school using an aerial map, followed by creating our own maps and designing our ideal playgrounds. The children have also been highly motivated by earning Dojo points, and we are so excited to see their enthusiasm continue to grow next half term!



## Year 2

In Year 2, we have been working hard making Ferris wheels. The children learnt about an axle - the mechanism used on a Ferris wheel, made their own design then used recycled resources to create a final product. We enjoyed learning about a balanced meal, where we designed and prepared tortilla wraps - which were delicious!



## Year 3

Lions class has been busy in computing this half term, learning how to use different codes to make characters move. We have designed backgrounds for superheroes who can fly or disappear and made rockets launch. We have also enjoyed learning to use running and cross stitch when making a cushion. We had to include a patch on our design and sew material together.



## Year 4

Year 4 have enjoyed their Geography lessons this half-term, learning about the water cycle and river features. We went for a walk to the River Ouzel to see some of these features in action, sketching our findings to discuss back in class. We have also been working hard on our swimming skills, using front and back crawl, as well as thinking about water safety.

## Year 5

Year 5 have really enjoyed DT this half term. They cooked Bolognese sauce from scratch by adapting recipes and preparing ingredients. They also programmed micro:bits as temperature gauges for an animal enclosure by inputting code to set off a visual and auditory alert when the temperature had dropped too low.

## Year 6

Year 6 enjoyed a fantastic few days at Woodrow High House, taking part in a range of exciting activities and making some wonderful memories together.

They threw themselves into every challenge – climbing Jacob's Ladder, taking a daring Leap of Faith, trying their hand at archery and working as a team on shelter building and challenge courses. Throughout the trip, the children showed great teamwork, determination and courage.

Evenings were a highlight too. One night was spent gathered around the campfire, listening to stories and enjoying time

together, while another was spent relaxing with hot chocolate and a movie – the perfect way to unwind after a busy day outdoors.

It was a brilliant trip that gave everyone the chance to challenge themselves, support one another, and enjoy a great adventure. Well done to all who took part!



### 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 2025-2026 is:

*Year 1*  
Albie

*Year 2*  
Victory  
Raven



### *Environment*

Rowan  
Ella  
Matilda  
Adriana

### *Charity*

Oliver M  
Oscar  
Georgia

### *Community*

Charlie  
Gracie  
Quinn

### The Eco Council are:

Sara  
Sydney  
Dakshana  
Lyla  
Rosalie  
Oscar B  
Jacob  
Emillia  
Lilah  
Olivia  
Seb  
Avery  
Sophie  
Emily  
Anatasia  
Lewis  
Pippa  
Emma

### **Lunchtime Activities**

The children have been enjoying a range of different activities on offer during lunchtime this half term. There has been a computer club, art club and the library open for pupils to enjoy reading. On the playground a variety of activities have been available for the children to try. Next half term we will be looking to

develop some pupil leadership roles to help support the activities on offer.



### **Donations Request**

To help with the playground developments we are looking for donations of any outdoor storage units/containers that will store toys and resources. We would also be very grateful for any donations of construction toys such as large building blocks, Duplo or Lego etc.

### National Poetry Day

Cedars had a wonderful time celebrating poetry for National Poetry Day this year. We shared lots of poems, year groups 1-6 wrote a Kennings poem and some classes even performed poetry to each other. We have published many of the poems in our classrooms and also on the website (there were so many lovely ones, we ran out of room on the walls in the classrooms!).

### Mental Health Day



The children and staff enjoyed wearing something yellow as part of World Mental Health Day. 'Hello Yellow' is an opportunity to raise awareness of, as well as promote, good mental health and emotional wellbeing through a range of different activities. To date, we have raised an amazing £166 - thank you! There is still time donate if you would like to do so:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/cedars-primary-school-helloyellow25>

### Harvest Festival

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Harvest Festival. We are very proud of our children and once again, your generous donations for the Milton Keynes Food Bank will go directly to helping many families in need of support. As always, we are very grateful to Newport Pagnell Baptist Church for allowing us to hold our assembly in Lovat Hall.

### Attendance

#### Attendance Matters



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-6:00pm

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

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 to do:

<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.*

### 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

speechblubs.com

### **Pencil Cases**

Thank you for ensuring the children in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 have the resources they need in school in their pencil case, this has helped them to become more independent and organised. They will be bringing these home over half term for a top up of glue sticks or any additional resources they may need.

### **Poppy Appeal**

We are once again supporting the Royal British Legion's Annual Poppy Appeal. After half term, members of the School Council will be selling poppies and other items in the Activity Room at morning breaktime. Children are welcome to bring small change to school if they would like to support this cause.

### **Dates for Your Diary**

- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 1.30pm - Prospective Parent Tours for Reception 2026
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November - Children in Need Day
- Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 10.00am - Nursery Open Morning
- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 9.30am & 10.30am - Prospective Parent Tours for Reception 2026
- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2.30pm - Reception Christmas Performance
- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 9.15am - Years 1 & 2 Christmas Performance
- Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2.15pm - Years 1 & 2 Christmas Performance
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 3.30pm - Christmas Fayre
- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2.30pm - Nursery Christmas Performance

- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December 1.30pm - Christmas Service at St Peter & St Paul's Church

### **And finally ...**

Thank you for your continued support this half term. We wish you a lovely break and look forward to welcoming the children back to Cedars Primary School and Nursery on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025.**

Kind regards

Mrs Goldsmith