



SILCHESTER CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Compassion, Courage & Respect

Dear Families of Silchester,

The last day of the term is upon us! We would like to use this opportunity to thank you all for your support of our special little school. Silchester is such a great place to learn, grow and experience childhood. This is always particularly highlighted at this time of year. None of it would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, so I wanted to extend a particular thanks to them for this term and wish them all the best as they fall into Christmas!

As well as a few notices, this (long!) newsletter also serves to share updates on the children's curriculum learning from this term. I do hope that you enjoy hearing about what they've been up to! But we begin with a message from our fabulous PTA.

PTA Fundraising Update – Autumn Term Highlights

Dear Parents, Teachers, and Supporters,

As we approach the end of the Autumn term, we want to take a moment to thank you for your incredible support and generosity in making this term's fundraising initiatives a huge success. Thanks to your involvement, we raised a fantastic total of **£3,215**, which we have already allocated to some essential school resources and activities.

What We Raised:

- **Christmas Fair – £2,020**
- **Christmas Designs – £280**
- **Children's Christmas Market – £594**
- **Bag2School – £168**
- **Pub Quiz – £90**
- **2nd Hand Uniform Sale – £63**



Total Raised: £3,215 (our most successful Autumn term of fundraising ever!)

How Your Support Has Made a Difference:

Thanks to your amazing contributions, we have been able to allocate funding to a number of important areas that will directly benefit our children and enhance their learning experience. Here's how the funds have been spent so far (with much more to come):

- **Classroom Necessities – £900**
This funding has been used to provide essential supplies and materials to enhance learning across the school.
- **First Aid Kits - £118**
A kit per classroom as well as one to take on trips/for events to ensure the ongoing safety of our children.
- **IT (Secure Photo Hard Drive & TT Rockstars) – £345**
We have invested in a secure photo hard drive to safely store school memories, and provided access to TT Rockstars, a fantastic online resource for supporting children's maths skills.

- **Learning Behaviour Books – £500**

We've purchased a set of books to support the development of positive learning behaviours, which will be used across the school to help children with their emotional and social learning.

- **Playground Equipment – £493**

New playground equipment has been purchased to ensure our children have access to a variety of activities to keep them active and engaged during break times.

- **Sports Kit – £237**

We've invested in new sports kit, ensuring our children have the right equipment and look the part for school events!

- **Year R (Ladybirds) Anvil Theatre Trip – £353**

We were able to fund a memorable and educational theatre trip for our Ladybird's class, expanding their learning experience beyond the classroom.

- **Christmas Crackers - £68**

Adding some festive fun to the school Christmas dinner!

- **Wow Week – £1,000**

This allocation will support our termly Wow Week, providing an exciting and immersive learning experience for all children. The funding covers a range of activities, workshops, and experiences designed to inspire and engage our children.

Thank You!

We want to express our deepest gratitude to all who volunteered, attended events, and donated items. Your support has allowed us to make an immediate and meaningful impact on the school and our children's education. Together, we are truly making a difference.

Looking Ahead

As we look forward to the Spring term, we are already planning more exciting events and fundraising activities to continue supporting the school. Stay tuned for more opportunities to get involved! Thank you once again for being such an essential part of our school community. We look forward to what we can accomplish together in the future. Warm regards, Your Silchester PTA

Mrs Dowling says...

Goodness me, what a busy term! We have loved our Faraway Fridays, getting to receive our new garden equipment, going on our trip to the theatre, having visitors in and to top it off, an incredible Christmas Show Performance! And so much learning in between, we have been so busy! I am one very proud teacher, and I am loving watching how much my ladybirds are growing 😊 Have a fantastic Christmas break and I can't wait to see you in the new year for so much more fun!

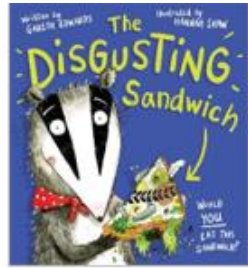


Miss Dodson says...

This half term our topic has been “Making and Creating” with a particular focus on our book “The Disgusting Sandwich”! We made our own disgusting sandwiches and wrote instructions on how to make the PERFECT sandwich looking at imperative verbs (bossy words!) and adverbs for the Year 2s. However, this half term has also been all about the Nativity!! We spent countless hours learning the songs and the lines and the children did SO well and put in so much effort. They should be so proud of themselves, and we hope you enjoyed the performance.

Autumn 2 term is possibly my favourite half term with all things Nativity and Christmas, and this week

we made lots of crafts to finish off our “Making and Creating” topic well: clay reindeer ornaments, decorating Christmas biscuits, sewing our own DT Christmas stockings and creating 2025 calendars! We hope your Christmas is full of lots of happiness and joy and we look forward to seeing you after the Christmas break!



Mrs Hunter says...

Hazel Class have loved travelling back in time to learn about the Victorians. We have discovered how life has changed for children. Through a range of sources, we have found out about work and school life, toys, school and amazing inventions. We even made our own Victorian toys. We have used this knowledge to write information posters. Alongside this, we have been learning about shapes and fractions and practising our times tables.



We loved a trip to the Willink to enhance our Art skills. Everyone produced some printing work in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. What a busy half term with practising and performing our nativity play! We hope you loved it.



Mrs Cook and Mrs Forrester say...

Wow, what a busy term we have had! In English, we have been busy writing descriptive paragraphs based on Arthur and the Golden Rope. Their writing is full of suspense, drama, figurative language and plenty of adjectives to describe those Norwegian mythical monsters. It's been an absolute joy seeing their writing develop and the children enjoying the writing process.

In DT, Year 4 has created class advent bunting. They have carefully cut out their chosen material using a template and sewn-on numbers or sequins. A big thank you to Mrs Scott and Julie for helping create such wonderful bunting, which will travel up with them to Year 6.

In maths, we have been busy learning about fractions and time. We have also been busy learning about Antarctica, which matched so well with what we have been reading in Guided Reading. We have been clarifying vocabulary, improving our fluency and honing in on our retrieval, prediction and inference skills. Super work year 4! We hope you have a wonderful Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Mrs Pulford says...

Mrs Pulford says, 'Wow' this has been a busy half term! We all had an amazing few days at Ufton Court! All the staff we worked with at Ufton Court praised the children for their attitude to learning new skills, teamwork, consideration and care for others and courage to try new things.

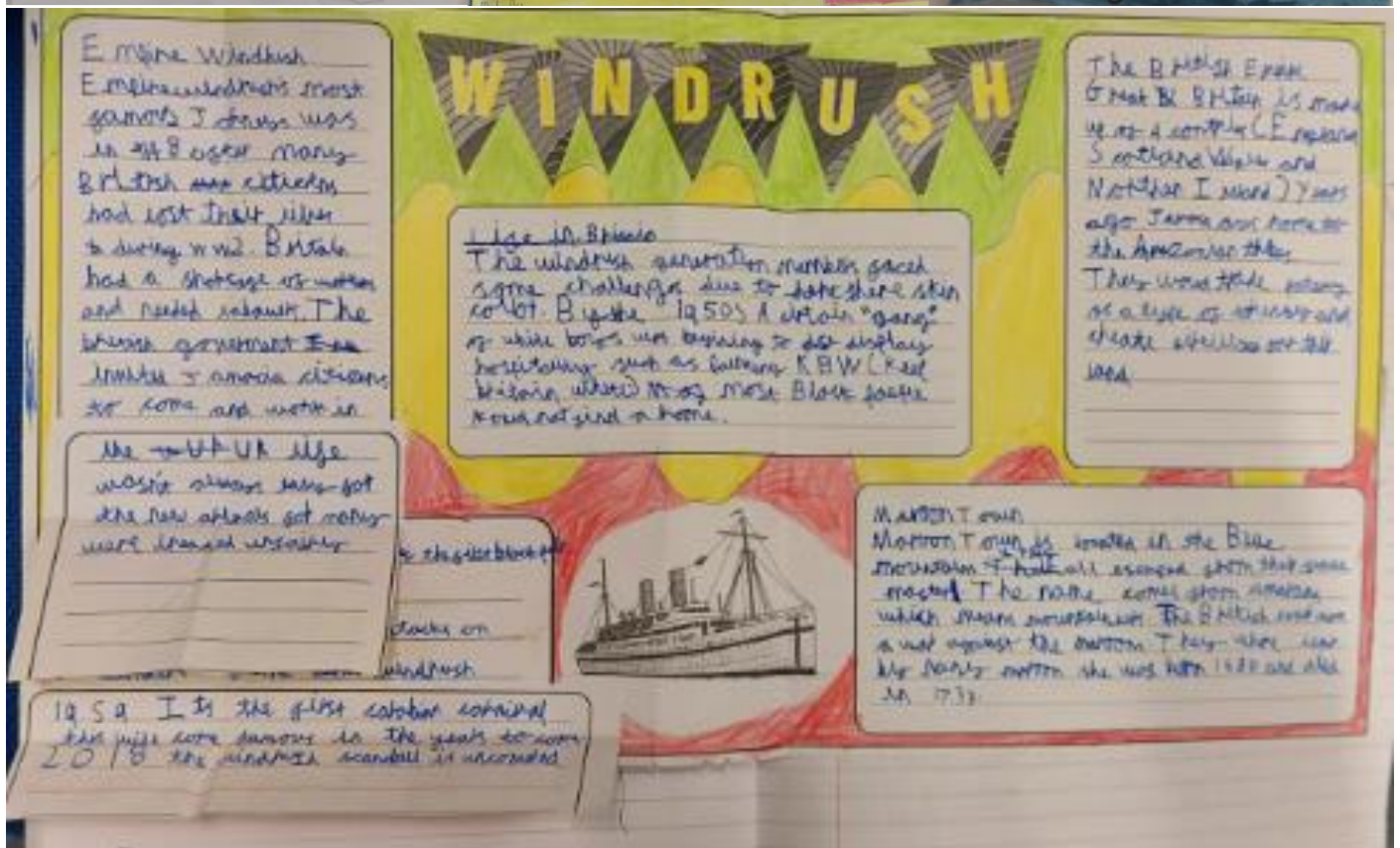


Back in school, in maths, we have really worked our brains learning about fractions, decimals and percentages. In English, we have enjoyed reading, watching and writing our own narratives for 'The Lost Things' and wrote new playscript sections for 'The Tempest'. In History we have learnt about the Maya: who they are, where they live and their cultures and beliefs. In DT we have learnt to make small toys out of felt. In PE we have learnt how to use maps in orienteering and have developed our team skills in football. We have carried out a range of experiments to learn more about forces in science.

Well done Year 5 for a fantastic term!

Miss Dadral says...

Year 6 have been incredible this half term! Their enthusiasm for our World War 2 topic has been fantastic! I have thoroughly adored getting to teach them every week and to witness the progress they have all made. The children also invested themselves during our Windrush writing unit. I even heard that the children were educating their adults at home too! It just shows how much they have grown, and it makes me excited to see more of this after Christmas.



Autumn Term Values Awards

Many congratulations to the deserving winners of this term's values award! This award is only given out once a term. It is nominated by class teachers for the children who always demonstrate our values of Compassion, Courage and Respect. It was my great honour to take them to the Pop-Up this morning for a hot chocolate! Well done and a big thank you to Emme, Lucy, Myla, Zoie, Elina, Byron, Katherine and Esther. You make a big difference to our school and I'm sure one day the world!



Carol Concert

It was so lovely to have so many of you join us for our carol concert this week. It was really special to share this time together in candlelight! Our choir sounded beautiful, and our year 6 speakers did us all proud. HUGE thanks to Helen Bristow for taking on the majority of the organisation.

Nativity Trail

Our Hazel and Chestnut classes were lucky enough to take part in a nativity trail around our school field led by Reverends Karen and Rob and their helpers. The sun shone brightly, and everyone enthusiastically enjoyed following the twinkling stars to hear and see the amazing story of Mary, Joseph, the angels, inn keeper, shepherd, Wise Kings, King Herod and of course, baby Jesus. Our thanks to all the adults involved for bringing such an important Christian event to life.



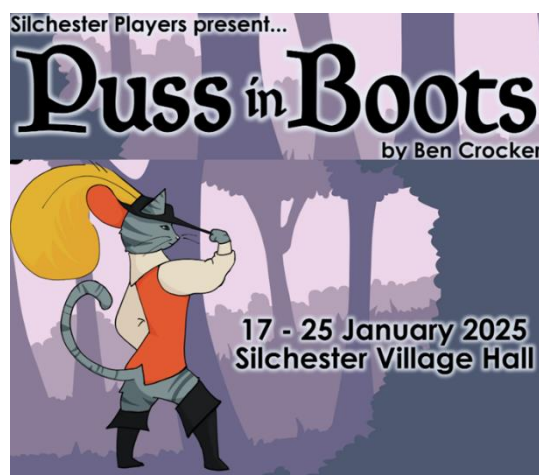
PE Days Spring Term

When we return to school after Christmas, there is a change to the children's PE days as shown below. Whilst some classes have two days and others one, this does not mean that children are getting unfair amounts of PE. We teach two foundation subjects during the afternoon and two per week are dedicated to PE. Some teachers prefer to teach a whole afternoon of PE (two slots in one

afternoon) whereas others prefer to do their sessions separately. All children will continue on the same learning journey for the PE curriculum covering two disciplines per term as normal.

Please do not worry if it takes us a few weeks to get used to the new schedule and there are the odd days where the wrong uniform appears - it is no biggy and I'll remind everyone again in January.

Class	PE Days
Ladybirds Class (YrR)	Thursday
Chestnut Class (Yr1/2)	Monday
Hazel Class (Yr2/3)	Tuesday
Sycamore Class (Yr4)	Tuesday and Friday
Beech Class (Yr5)	Wednesday and Friday
Oak Class (Yr6)	Monday



Post-Christmas Pantomime

Silchester Players are performing the pantomime Puss in Boots in January. It stars budding actors from our local community. Tickets are available to purchase at the following link:

[All Performances | Silchester Players](#)

PACE yourself this Christmas!

If you haven't seen 'That Christmas' on Netflix it is a hard recommend! It reminded me a little of Silchester and our community spirit! One of the lines states that Christmas is like a magnifying glass for emotions. Feelings of love and joy can be magnified, but also feelings of loneliness, stress and worry can feel even greater. With that in mind, I thought I'd close our newsletter by sharing some information about PACEing yourself!

Dan Hughes' Acronym PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) is a 'way of being' with children that we use in school. Hopefully, the resource below is a helpful reminder to take some time for yourselves amongst the busyness of the season, to value what's important and to reach out to those we know who may need a little extra compassion this Christmas.

The Power of PACE at Christmas Time

There are a lot of feelings flying around at Christmas time for children and adults alike. Finding the right balance for YOU is something to work towards. PACE can help. PACE - Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy



Playfulness isn't the same as playing but is enjoying time with someone else or yourself in an unconditional way.

This can look like a 5 minute sofa snuggle with someone, walking hand in hand, swapping cringey cracker joke or even taking yourself off for a cry on your own if that's where you're at and trying to leave behind any guilt about it.

It's about showing a real interest in someone, or yourself, and finding something you really enjoy about them - or you. Even if that's 2 minutes alone with yourself outside the front door!



Acceptance means sitting with strong emotions or perspective of another and knowing that you might not be able to take these away. There may be no words of advice to give, strategies to implement or thoughts to share, only comfort by offering your safe presence.

It is allowing uncomfortable sensations and emotions to be in your own body without judgement. Accepting their existence.

For an example of this and Empathy, watch the YouTube clip called 'Brené Brown on Empathy' or find inspiration from the song 'Hold Space' by Ward Thomas.



Curiosity isn't about asking "why?" even when this is exactly what we want to know! It's about wondering what is going on inside for someone or ourself.

It's about taking the risk of being wrong "Can I share my ideas with you... I wonder if... I might be wrong, so tell me if I am, but here are my thoughts..."

A way of letting someone know that your mind is on their mind and genuinely interested in anything at all that's going on in there without judgement.

It is practising this same non-judgemental curiosity within ourselves.



Empathy can take a lot of energy at Christmas. Sitting with the disappointment of a child who hasn't got the gift they hoped for "I can see the sadness in your eyes that it's not what you wanted" or accepting our own disappointment that the time hasn't felt very festive "I am where I am and things are how they are and I'm going to do my best to feel okay with that".

A top tip is try to move away from reassurance or denial of feelings - others or your own. Naming what is happening for ourselves or another helps us in our offering of empathy.

To PACE oneself: "To do something at a speed that is steady and that allows one to continue without becoming too tired."

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Upcoming Key Dates

Monday 6 th January	First Day Back
Friday 10 th January	In School Christingle
Thursday 23 rd January	Workshop for parents – Big Emotions led by PBS (Primary Behaviour Service)
Monday 3 rd February	Chestnut Class (1/2) Trip to Science Museum
Tuesday 4 th February	Beech Class (5) Trip to Science Museum
Friday 7 th February	9:15am - Workshop for parents – Big Emotions led by PBS (Primary Behaviour Service)
Tuesday 11 th February	Internet Safety Day
Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st February	Half Term
Monday 24 th February	INSET DAY
Tuesday 25 th – Friday 28 th February	WOW Week

I hope that you and your families have the most wonderful of Christmases together, and I'll look forward to welcoming you back to school in the New Year

Rachel Moir

Rachel Moir
Head of School