



Newsletter September 2023

Dear Families,

Welcome back everyone and a very special, warm welcome to our new pupils and their families. We officially welcome Mrs Barford too, who will be teaching Elm Class. I really hope you enjoyed the summer break and that you all feel refreshed and ready for a new academic year. I am sending this newsletter out in advance of the first day back and cannot wait to see everyone in their shiny shoes and smart new uniform! I will continue to send out these monthly newsletters, usually in the first week of each month. You will also receive other messages via email if there are important announcements or reminders about events. This academic year will be very special as it is 150 years in Spring 2024 since Shalford School first opened its doors. We will be having an event to mark the occasion - more details to come. Any ideas on how we should celebrate, gratefully received! We are all very much looking forward to teaching and caring for your wonderful children for, what promises to be, another amazing year.

Best Wishes,
Mrs Penney

Office and Kitchen

We are currently recruiting a new school cook. We have arranged to cover most of the cooking with another cook within the Trust, but Mrs Coombs may need to step in at times and cover until we have employed someone permanent. Interviews will be in the next few weeks and hopefully this will all be sorted before the October half term. We are lucky that Mrs Coombs is a skilled cook and can step in, but please do be patient if she doesn't reply to emails as promptly as she usually would.

MCAS APP



Please use the MCAS (My Child at School) app to pay for school dinners, Breakfast Club, Thursday Lego and Fun Club, school trips/experiences. You also need it to book parent evening appointments and One Plan (SEND) meetings. If you struggle with the app, you can also use the browser version of MCAS:

www.mychildatschool.com

Reading – a home/ school collaboration

We expect that every child engages in at least one enjoyable reading activity at home with a grown-up every day, which is where they will be able to put into practise what they have learned and develop a love of books and reading. Please help your child to reach their potential by supporting them with reading at home. Each child will have a brand new yellow reading diary each year, so please record a quick note each day of any reading at home. Start the new year with good habits and establish a routine that makes quality time for books - always. Thank you for your support and commitment. We are so passionate about reading at Shalford and hope you are too!

Balances

IMPORTANT MESSAGE: If you would like your child to have a school lunch, your account must be in credit. You must therefore top up in advance, using MCAS. If your account is below £0, we will call you and ask you to top up or bring in a packed lunch. Reception, Y1 and Y2 are provided with a free school meal, so can ignore the above. If your child is in Y3-6 and you feel that you may be eligible for free meals due to a low income or other

factor, please contact Mrs Coombs in the office and she can check this quickly and confidentially for you.

Online safety -a reminder

It has been in the news over the summer that, sadly, online grooming is at an all time high. The NSPCC website provides some sound advice about keeping children safe online. Please do take time to read this:

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

As staff and parents, it is our joint responsibility to ensure we:

- have safe filtering
- have age-appropriate screentime limits
- control which websites, apps and games children have access to (making sure children are the correct age to use them)
- don't allow children to talk to others online and teach them not to make online 'friends' that may not be who they say they are
- don't allow primary school aged children to use any Social Media sites such as Instagram and Tiktok etc.
- supervise all use of the internet (especially Youtube!) and regularly check search history
- talk your child through any worries you have, when you notice they have shown signs of unsafe online behaviour
- discourage any overly violent games or games that have the sole aim of 'killing' – this is really unhealthy and affects how children play and socially interact at school. Some free gaming sites don't have age -restrictions so you have to make the decision yourself.

Water Bottles Reminder

All children need a water bottle in school each day and will be encouraged to drink fluids throughout the day.

Communication at drop off time

Parents are not allowed on site in the mornings. If you need to communicate with the class teacher, please do so via an alternative method or pass a message through Mrs Coombs in the office. New Reception children only,

can be accompanied by their parent, to the low gate or door of Elm Class. All other pupils must say goodbye at the main entrance gate. Teacher email addresses are the bottom of this newsletter if you need them.

Times Tables

Please encourage your child to know their times tables off by heart. It is an essential life skill. In particular Y2, Y3 and Y4 pupils should be working towards knowing them 'off by heart' before the summer term of Y4. Children can use this fun website to practise - It's free.

[Multiplication Tables Check - 2023 - Timestables.co.uk](https://www.timestables.co.uk)

School Day and Attendance Reminders

Let us start the new school year with good attendance habits too. Please ensure your child is on time for school each day. Drop off time is between 8.35am and 8.45am. **If children miss the register at 8.45am, they will be marked as unauthorised/late.** Pick up time is 3.15pm outside your child's classroom.

I cannot authorise any term-time holidays or days out, so do expect a fine if you take your child out. All schools across Essex follow the same expectations. We strongly encourage you to ensure that your children have high attendance levels, otherwise they are at risk of falling behind their peers academically and missing out on social opportunities.

If your child needs time off school for essential appointments or other reasons, you will need to fill in an absence request form and provide evidence (e.g. screenshot or copy of appointment letter). Mrs Coombs can provide you with a form.

We request that you book dentist appointments and anything non urgent, outside of school hours.

Y6 parents – Secondary Schools

The closing date to apply for Secondary school places for September 2024 has not yet been announced but is usually around the end of October. I am sure you will have already begun to consider the options and found out about open days for your Year 6 child. Once you have decided, you can apply online here: [Secondary school places | Essex County Council](https://www.essex.gov.uk/secondary-school-places). The nearest schools are Tabor and Hedingham but we find that children from Shalford go to a range of other schools too.

Morning Snack Reminder

All children are only allowed to eat FRUIT/VEG/DRIED FRUIT at breaktimes. No cereal bars or other snacks are allowed. Elm and Ash Class (Year R, 1, 2) are provided with a free piece of fruit/veg each day.

Uniform/PE Kit Reminders

New uniform can be ordered here:

<https://sign-language-essex-ltd.myshopify.com/collections/shalford-primary-school>

For preloved stock please contact:

fosp1@yahoo.com

Please name all individual items of PE Kit and uniform.

Jewellery: very small, plain stud earrings are permitted but larger studs and hoops/dangly earrings are not permitted. **All jewellery to be removed for PE.** If children

are too young or unable to take out own earrings, they should not wear them on PE/swim days.

Hair: hair must be tied back for the whole school day. We will ask children to tie their hair back when they come in with it loose.

No trainers or sandals for school please - plain black shoes only.

No nail varnish please.

Swimming Information

All children in Beech Class go swimming in the Spring Term (January to Easter Holidays), meaning they have approximately 12 lessons, for 2 year in a row, totalling around 24 lessons. More information will come to you nearer the time. Differing abilities will be catered for, but it is obviously much better if your child can swim a little before these lessons start, so please go ahead and book swimming lessons if it is something you are considering doing outside of school. It is so good for wellbeing and general fitness, as well as being an essential life skill.

Breakfast Club and After School Clubs

To attend Early Bird/Breakfast Club, just turn up at the black door in the carpark and ring the doorbell. There is a sibling discount which will show up on your MCAS account.

Option 1: Breakfast Club starts at 8am and includes Toast/cereal/drinks for £3.50 per day. Option 2: 'Early Bird' Club starts at 8.15am and does not include food or drink - we expect that children have eaten before they arrive. The cost for Early Bird Club is only £1.25 per day. If a child needs to arrive before 8.15am, the price will be £3.50, regardless of whether they eat or not.

All our after-school clubs run 3.15-4.15pm and must be booked in advance. All Clubs are available to all ages. See details for each club below:

PLACES AVAILABLE IN ALL CLUBS - YOU DO NOT NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF A HALF TERM TO BOOK ON

Monday	Dance Club – book a place by contacting info@taylorsdancecompany.co.uk or 07900 661885
Tuesday	Currently no club
Wednesday	Currently no club
Thursday	Lego and Fun Club: run by school staff (small snack and drink included). £4.75 per session (book and pay on MCAS APP)
Friday	Football Club run by Colchester United https://colchester-united-cf.classforkids.io/info/924

Where a club is run by an external provider, you will need to book directly with them. Links are above next to each club.

As you can see, we currently have a bit of an issue with Tuesday and Wednesday Clubs. We are working on it to find the best solution so please bear with us.

Key Dates: Autumn Term 2023

- 4th and 5th September 2023 are non-pupil days. First day back for pupils will be 6th September.

- 28th September Harvest Celebration 1.30pm (venue TBC)
- 29th September Cake Sale for Macmillan after school (please leave cake donation at the office)- bring loose change
- 29th September - details TBC but save the date for the FOSPS Bingo night - Eyes down!
- 10th October – Tours for new intake of Reception children hoping to start in September 2024 - 9.30am and 10am
- TBC 12th October Ash Class Trip
- TBC 19th October Chestnut Class Trip Duxford
- 23-27th October 2023 School closed for half term
- 30th October 2023 Non Pupil Day
- 1st November Parents Evening 2.30-6pm
- 17th November 2023 Wear Spotty accessories or Children in Need/Pudsey merchandise (bring £1)
- 21st Nov Beech Class History day details TBC
- 24th Nov 9am-9.30am Coffee Morning in School Hall - all parents and carers welcome
- 14th December Elm and Ash Class Nativity 10.30am
- 15th December Elm and Ash Class Nativity 1.30pm
- 18th Dec 6pm Beech and Chestnut Carols-venue TBC. Piano students will also perform festive pieces.
- 19th December Xmas Dinner day and Xmas Jumper day (bring £1 for Save the Children Charity)
- 20th Dec 2023 last day (non-uniform and Christmas Craft Day)
- 21st Dec – 3rd Jan 2024 School Closed for Christmas break

- 5th July Sports Day 10am start. Family Picnic 12-1pm
- 10th July KS2 Production 1.30 and 6pm
- 11th July informal parents evening (no appointments) 3.15-4pm
- 12th July Annual reports come home
- 16th July Meet the new teacher morning plus new Reception pupils to visit
- 19th July Non Uniform day (bring £1 for FOSPS) and last day for pupils
- 22nd and 23rd July Non Pupil Days
- 24th July Summer holidays begin (first day back in Sept 2024 TBC)

**Please note - More details, dates and FOSPS events will be added throughout the year, so check the 'dates' section each month when the new newsletter comes out. **

Contacts:

Executive Head: kharrison@compassps.uk

Head of school: ipenney@compassps.uk

SENCo: vchilds@compassps.uk

School office: sfcontact@compassps.uk

Teachers:

klocke@compassps.uk

nhinton@compassps.uk

kbarford@compassps.uk

aneave@compassps.uk

More Dates...

Here are some brief details of key future dates:

- 4th January 2024 Children return to school
- 8th Jan last tours for prospective families 2pm and 2.30pm
- 15th Jan Y6 parents only meeting about residential PGL trip 3.15pm
- 6th Feb Parents evening 2.30-6pm
- 13th Feb Beech Trip to Sutton Hoo
- 19th-23rd Feb School closed for half term
- 26th Pupils back to school
- 5th March – whole school Science day
- 7th March World Book Day – wear PJs to school and bring a favourite book
- 28th March last day
- 29th March -14th April - school closed for Easter holidays
- Monday 15th April – back to school
- 24th -26th April Y6 2 night residential trip
- 6th May Bank Holiday
- 10th May 9-9.30 coffee morning – all welcome
- 13th -16th May KS2 SATs exams for Y6
- 21st May FAB Science experience morning (at a small cost to parents- more details nearer the time)
- 27th -31st May school closed for half term
- 3rd June back to school