

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

What a busy and brilliant half term we've had at Godmanchester Community Academy! It's been wonderful to see our pupils making such strong progress, showing kindness, resilience, and enthusiasm in everything they do.

Our Little Wandle phonics programme continues to go from strength to strength. Children are making excellent progress in their phonics sessions, and it's been a joy to see them engaging so keenly with the wide range of texts in their group reading sessions. Staff are incredibly proud of the hard work and determination shown by the children — and we're all excited to see how this continues to flourish next term.

History has truly come alive this half term! Year 2 threw themselves into their Great Fire of London topic with a brilliant History off the Page day that had everyone fully immersed — we're pretty sure a few embers are still glowing! Meanwhile, Year 4 travelled back even further in time for their Roman Day, gathering invaluable hands-on insights into life in ancient times. These days really bring learning to life and create memories that stick far beyond the classroom.

Many year groups have been inspired by the beauty and treasures of nature during their art units — and we can't wait to show off some of the final pieces in our new gallery area. Look out for its official opening in the Spring Term — it promises to be a feast for the eyes!

Year 5 had an out-of-this-world experience at the National Space Centre. Highlights included the planetarium and the chance to explore the interactive exhibitions, including stepping inside a model of the Space Centre itself — a truly stellar day!

To get into the festive spirit, a select group of children enjoyed a magical performance of The Snowman at Hinchingsbrooke School. Our pupils represented the school beautifully, and several members of the public took time to comment on how wonderfully the children conducted themselves on the walk there and back — a real testament to their kindness and maturity.

Our Santa Dash was another huge success — special thanks to Mrs Savage and Mr Gibbs for organising a spirited and fun event! The PTA's disco was a brilliant evening, raising valuable funds to support our school. Thanks to their ongoing efforts, the PTA currently funds coaches for school trips, helping to keep these enriching experiences affordable for all families — something we deeply appreciate.

We've also welcomed some fascinating visitors this term, including a local magistrate and a local historian, enriching our pupils' understanding of the world around them. Year 2 also took part in a beautiful Christingle service at St Mary's Church led by Rev Busk — a peaceful and uplifting festive moment for all involved.

We are so proud of the hard work, kindness, and generosity of spirit shown by our pupils and staff every day. A heartfelt thank you goes to all the staff at the school who continue to go above and beyond for our children.

We also send our warm thanks and very best wishes to staff who are leaving us this term: Mrs Kidd and Mr Robbins. We are grateful for all they have given to our school community and wish them every success and happiness in their next adventures.

We also say a very fond farewell to Mrs Smith, who is leaving her role as Co-Headteacher. She will be greatly missed by pupils, staff, families, and the wider school community. Over the past two and a half years, Mrs Smith has shown unwavering commitment to Godmanchester Community Academy and its families. Her determination to meet the individual needs of every child, alongside the kindness, warmth, and humour she brings to all she does, has made a lasting impact on our school. We are incredibly grateful for her dedication and leadership, and her contribution will not be forgotten. We wish her every success and happiness in her next chapter.

Looking ahead to January, we are excited that Godmanchester Community Academy will be joining the CAM Academies Trust. This is a fantastic opportunity for our school to benefit from the expertise of Trust staff and to work collaboratively with other local schools within the trust — all in support of excellent outcomes for our pupils.

Thank you to every family, pupil, and staff member for your continued support, dedication, and positivity. Wishing you all a restful and joyful holiday — and we look forward to seeing everyone back in January, ready for more learning, laughter, and success!

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## RECEPTION (EYFS)

We have had a really productive Autumn 2 term in EYFS. The children returned after the break already settled into our routines, and they have shown themselves to be enthusiastic learners who consistently demonstrate our core value of hard work.

We have been especially pleased with the progress the children have made in phonics. They are absorbing new learning brilliantly, and we are grateful for the support you continue to provide at home to keep them engaged.

In English, we have focused on the story *Rosie's Walk*. The children have been fully involved and confidently retold the story using their story maps and through verbal retelling. The text has supported rich conversations about vocabulary—particularly positional language—and has given the children a clear structure for innovating and creating their own versions. They have loved all the practical activities linked to the story, and we have been very impressed with their writing outcomes.

In Maths, our main focus has been on numbers 1–5. We have worked on developing a deep understanding of each number, exploring different representations and practising skills such as subitising, sequencing, and finding one more and one less. We have also explored 2D shapes, learning their names and identifying them in everyday life.

Our Understanding the World and Art sessions have continued to focus on observing seasonal changes. Thank you for your generous donations—the children thoroughly enjoyed using natural objects to paint, build, and print. Using poems from our Poetry Basket, such as *Leaves are Falling*, *Chop Chop*, and *Falling Apples*, has further enriched this learning. Building on our English text, we have also introduced the children to different types of maps, including maps of our local area.

In PSHE, we have been learning about feelings and understanding emotions. The children have been introduced to our 5-point scale, now displayed in our calm corner, which gives them a clear visual to help express how they are feeling. Using *The Colour Monster*, we explored different emotional scenarios, encouraging the children to describe how someone might feel and how they could help in each situation.

Come rain or shine—though sadly less shine recently—our outdoor area has remained open. The children continue to love the monkey bars and sandpit, and we frequently see wonderful teamwork as they build ramps for their bikes or set up car (bike) washes to extend their play.

We are incredibly proud of our cohort and the way they engage with their learning while showing kindness to one another. It is a joy to observe their social play, curiosity, and creativity. Their enthusiasm for forest school and their dance sessions with Miss Charlotte has been especially rewarding to see.

We wish all the children a happy holiday and a restful Christmas break.



**ROLE PLAY**



**COUNTING**



**UNDERSTANDING  
THE WORLD**



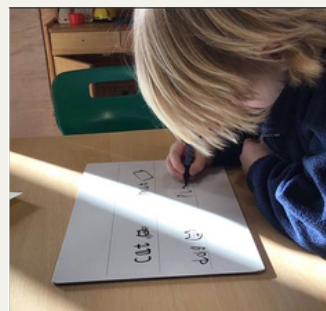
**FINE MOTOR  
SKILLS**



**DANCE**



**TALK FOR  
WRITING**



**PHONICS**



**FOREST SCHOOL**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

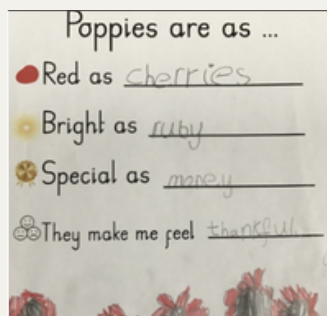
## YEAR ONE



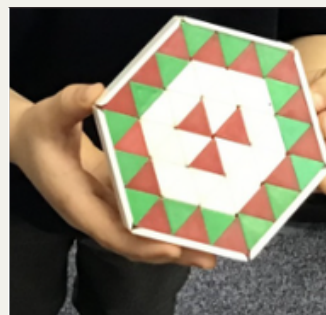
What a busy, joyful and successful half term it has been for our Year 1 children! We are incredibly proud of all they have achieved. In Maths, the children have been developing their understanding of subtraction, multiplication and fact families. They have also explored 3D shapes through their continuous provision, investigating their properties in a hands-on way. Alongside this, the children revisited and recapped patterns, strengthening their mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills. In English, the children thoroughly enjoyed learning the story of *Hansel and Gretel* through Makaton, which supported both understanding and engagement. Using this familiar story, they learned how to write character descriptions and settings before creating their own invented stories. Both the adults and children loved hearing these stories performed, showcasing their growing confidence and creativity. In Phonics, we could not be prouder of the children's effort and achievements. They are now confidently recognising digraphs and trigraphs, and their reading is becoming increasingly fluent. Their hard work and positive attitudes have really shone through. In Science, the children have been investigating materials and their properties, learning how these impact the choice of material for different purposes. In Geography, they learned about the United Kingdom, identifying its countries, flags, human features and physical landmarks. Our Art lessons were inspired by flora and fauna, with the children creating their own Eric Carle-style insects, linking beautifully to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. A truly proud moment was our Nativity performance. The children worked so hard to learn their songs, Makaton actions and dance routines, and their confidence on stage was wonderful to see. We would like to thank you for your continued support, especially with reading, and we wish our Year 1 superstars and their families a very happy Christmas!



**CONSTRUCTION**



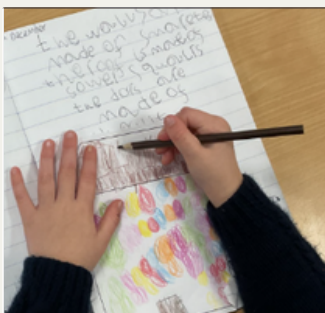
**WRITING**



**PATTERNS**



**ART**



**SCIENCE**



**MATHS**



**FOREST SCHOOL**



**CREATIVE PLAY**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR TWO



Our busy half term was kick started by our Great Fire of London Day. The children had great fun immersing themselves in what life would have been like in 1666. In English, we spent time exploring the story *Grandad's Island*. The children used their senses to help them write vivid setting descriptions and imagined the characters travelling through different macrohabitats. They also had a go at writing non-chronological reports about animals, focusing on using interesting facts and clear sections to organise their ideas. In Maths, the children have worked hard on addition and subtraction, using number lines to help them explain their thinking step by step. They've applied these strategies to a variety of worded problems, showing growing confidence as they reason through different situations. We also introduced some statistics work this half term, and the classes did brilliantly interpreting simple charts and graphs and discussing what the data shows. Our Science lessons have been full of curiosity and great questions. The children learned about what all living things need to survive and compared different macrohabitats and microhabitats, thinking carefully about which animals live where and why. They really enjoyed exploring the differences between large environments like rainforests or oceans and tiny ones like logs, leaf piles or patches of moss. Art has been a real highlight. Inspired by the work of Alice Fox and Nicola White, the children thought about the idea of collecting and treasuring natural or found objects. They photographed their own special items and created thoughtful, imaginative collages based on them. It was lovely to see how personal and unique each piece became. As we approached the festive season, the children enjoyed Christmas crafts, lots of singing, and the excitement of the Santa Run—which definitely brought plenty of joy! Thank you as well to everyone who came along to our Christingle celebration; it meant a lot to the children.

We're incredibly proud of all their hard work and are looking forward to another great half term ahead. We wish you a very merry Christmas.



**GREAT FIRE OF  
LONDON DAY**



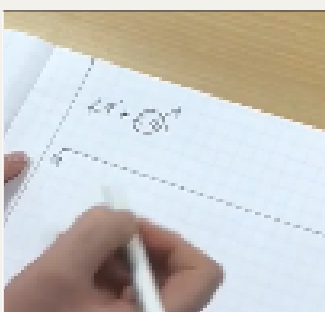
**GREAT FIRE OF  
LONDON DAY**



**GROUP WORK IN  
ENGLISH**



**SANTA RUN!**



**MATHS**



**INDOOR PE**



**FOREST SCHOOL**



**CHRISTINGLE  
SERVICE**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR THREE



Year 3 have had a wonderful half term and across their learning have been working hard and showing amazing creativity, curiosity and imagination.

In English, the children have written some vivid setting descriptions inspired by our guided reading book "Varjak Paw" using a range of senses like sight, smell and sound as well as powers of three to bring their worlds to life. They have also stepped into the shoes of some of the characters and written some fantastic diary entries in the first person.

In Maths, Year 3 have been focusing on developing their multiplication and division skills and have also explored three new times tables (3s, 4s and 8s). They have investigated the connection between these two operations and how we can use that knowledge to help answer questions.

The children have loved our Science topic this half term, particularly learning about the skeleton and its functions. In Geography, we have been exploring our neighbouring counties, developing our map skills and investigating different land uses around Godmanchester. Our PSHE topic this half term has been "My Emotions"; the children have thought about a range of emotions, how these impact others and how we can manage uncomfortable ones. Year 3 have continued learning about the Bible in World Views and how Christians learn from the stories it contains. For DT, the children have been learning how to sew, using running and cross-stitch to make a colourful bookmark.

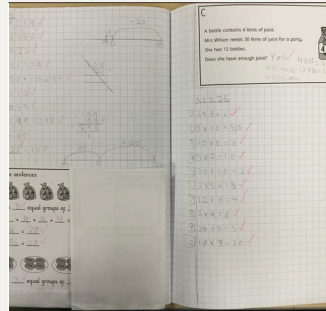
We are incredibly proud of their hard work this half term and are looking forward to a great start to the new year. Merry Christmas everyone!



REMEMBERING



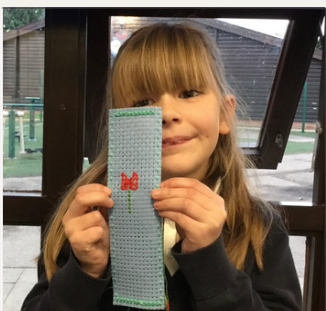
MAP SKILLS



MATHS



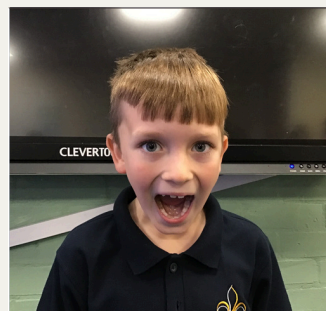
SCIENCE



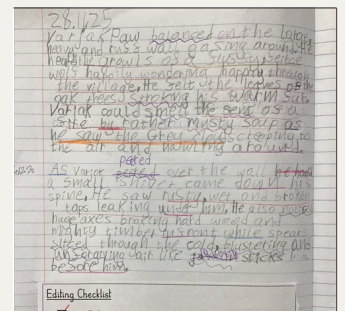
SEWING



SKELETONS



EMOTIONS



SETTINGS

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR FOUR

Year 4 have had a fantastic Autumn 2 term full of curiosity, creativity, and enthusiasm for learning. The children have settled really well into routines and consistently demonstrate our school values of hard work, kindness, and aspiration. They approach every lesson with a positive attitude and a real eagerness to learn, which has made the term incredibly enjoyable.

In English, they became Roman storytellers, retelling the legendary tale of Romulus and Remus and creating their own illustrated versions using fronted adverbials. They also wrote instructions on how to survive in the forest, applying adverbs and imperative verbs confidently. The children's imaginative writing, attention to detail, and growing independence have been a joy to see, and they have produced some wonderful pieces of work.

In Maths, we focused on multiplication and division up to  $\times 12$ , building confidence with fact families, bar models, and number tracks to spot patterns and apply skills to problem solving. We have also worked on the area of shapes by counting, investigating, and comparing, helping the children develop a clear understanding of measurement and spatial reasoning. Their perseverance and progress have been excellent.

Across the wider curriculum, Year 4 enjoyed a brilliant Roman Day, exploring Roman life through practical activities, crafts, and games. In PSHE, our theme of Friendship encouraged thoughtful discussions about kindness, empathy, and supporting one another. In RE, the children compared how Christians in different churches worship, learning about similarities and differences in practices and celebrations. They also marked Remembrance Day with stunning poppy wreaths and artwork of lone soldiers silhouetted against atmospheric skies.

We are incredibly proud of how Year 4 engage with their learning, show empathy towards each other, and embody our school values every day. We wish all the children a happy holiday and a restful Christmas break, and we look forward to another exciting term in the new year!



**ROMAN DAY**



**MATHS**



**PSHE**



**MOSAICS**



**PARTNERS**



**ROMAN ARMY**



**GROUP WORK**



**ROMAN GAME**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR FIVE

We have had such a busy Autumn 2 in Poplar and Holly. It has been wonderful to see the children working so hard and enjoying all of the 'extras' we have been able to organise. We all loved our Zoom lesson with the brilliantly entertaining poet Karl Nova. His session was incredibly engaging, and the poems the children were inspired to write were superb. Our visit to the National Space Centre in Leicester was fascinating, and we thoroughly enjoyed exploring the many exhibits. The Sir Patrick Moore Planetarium was phenomenal and a well-deserved highlight of the trip.

In English, we have been reading *Wolf Wilder* by Katherine Rundell, an adventure story set in western Russia in the early 20th century. The children have thoroughly enjoyed the book. Rundell's skilful use of vocabulary and imagery creates vivid pictures in the reader's mind, which inspired the children to write their own adventure stories based on the text.

- In Mathematics, our focus this half-term has been fractions — and we now (hopefully) love them a little bit more! We began by learning about equivalent fractions before extending this to adding and subtracting them. Although fractions can be a challenging topic, the children have shown great determination, resilience and enthusiasm. Well done, Year 5.

In the wider curriculum, we have continued our learning about the Anglo-Saxons in history. In geography, we have begun exploring land use in the local area, which we will continue to develop next half-term.

Have a wonderful Christmas ... and we will see you in 2026.



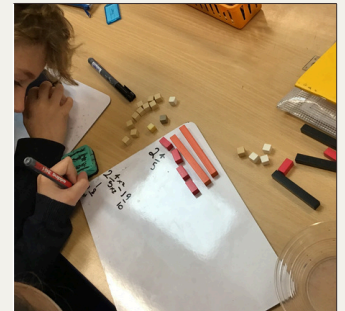
**ENGLISH: CELEBRATING WRITING**



**SPANISH**



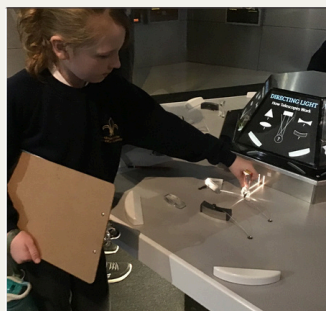
**KARL NOVA ZOOM LESSON**



**MATHS**



**SPACE CENTRE**



**SPACE CENTRE**



**SANTA DASH**



**ENGLISH: READING**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR SIX

Oak and Willow classes have had a fantastic half term, and it has been lovely to see the children consistently trying their best to follow the GCA Way. They have worked hard in their lessons and have taken pride in their achievements. We are incredibly proud of them. In English, our focus has been on writing descriptive settings and newspaper reports, inspired by our class text *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell. This adventurous novel follows four children who survive a plane crash in the Amazon rainforest. The children have thoroughly enjoyed the story and getting to know the characters, which has had a very positive impact on the quality and depth of their writing.

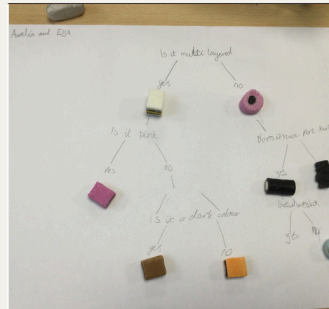
In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of fractions and converting units of measure, with the children showing great perseverance as concepts became more challenging.

- Across the wider curriculum, learning has included living things and their habitats in science, with a particular excitement around investigating microorganisms, as well as exploring South America in Geography. In Design and Technology, the children have been learning sewing skills and have particularly enjoyed designing and making their sock puppets. They demonstrated impressive resilience and determination when faced with the challenge of sewing on buttons!

The children were also inspired by a recent author visit, and our School Council representatives represented the school at the Remembrance Service, doing so with great respect and maturity. We wish you a merry Christmas.



**MATHS**



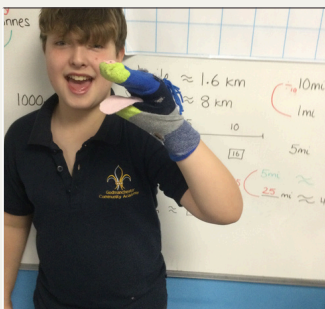
**SCIENCE**



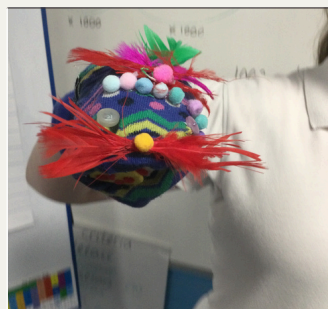
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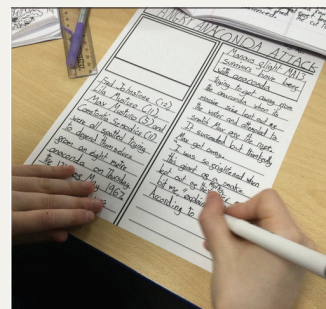
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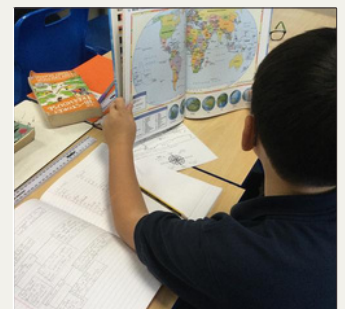
**DT**



**DT**



**ENGLISH**



**GEOGRAPHY**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Across the school, children continue to benefit from a rich and varied Beyond the Classroom offer, designed to support social, emotional and mental health needs, develop gross and fine motor skills, and strengthen communication, collaboration and teamwork. Many of these interventions thoughtfully support more than one area at a time, helping children to grow in confidence, resilience and self-awareness.

Forest School has remained a huge success for our intervention groups this term, with around 30 children accessing targeted sessions across three afternoons each week. These sessions run alongside our whole-class Forest School provision, which is currently in place for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and will extend to Year 3 in the spring term. Places within intervention groups are offered carefully, based on individual needs and the specific targets and objectives identified through children's support plans, ensuring that provision is purposeful and impactful.

LEGO® Therapy has proved invaluable for some pupils, supporting the development of collaboration, turn-taking and communication skills in a highly engaging way. ArtScape has offered a calm, structured and creative space where children have used art as a tool to explore and share feelings, building emotional literacy and self-expression. Monty, our much-loved therapy dog, has continued his weekly visits with his owner Denise, bringing smiles to children and adults alike while naturally prompting conversation and encouraging interaction.

This half term, we have also offered additional targeted sports sessions for some pupils, helping them to build confidence, develop gross motor skills and practise listening and teamwork. Together, these carefully planned opportunities celebrate the diverse strengths of our children and reflect our commitment to supporting the whole child, both in and beyond the classroom.



**LEGO  
CREATIONS**



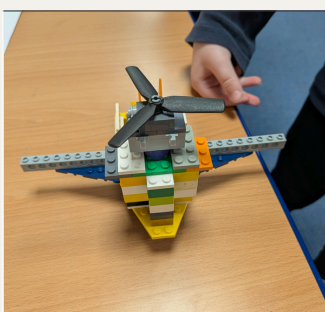
**JTA- BLING  
YOUR THING**



**FOREST SCHOOL**



**FOREST SCHOOL**



**MYSTERY NOUN  
- MILLIE H**



**MONTY**



**LEGO IN THE  
FOREST**



**HOT CHOCOLATE  
BY THE FIRE**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## COMMUNITY

We are proud of the strong and growing links we continue to build with our local community here in Godmanchester. This half term, a group of our Year 6 pupils represented the school at the Remembrance Parade, where they laid a wreath and read a poem with great respect and maturity. Alongside those representing the school, it was wonderful to see so many of our pupils taking part through local organisations such as Rainbows, Scouts and Beavers, and to see so many families attending to support the event.

Our choir also represented the school brilliantly this half term, bravely singing at the Christmas Lights Switch On despite the wet weather. Thank you to Mr Greenwood for his excellent coordination and leadership of the choir. Earlier in the term, the choir also sang at the Civic Service, showcasing both their talent and their commitment.

We were also delighted to welcome so many children and families to our recent PTA disco. A huge thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time to make the event such a success. We look forward to continuing to strengthen these community connections with many more events planned across the rest of the school year.

## STAFFING UPDATE

Whilst we are saddened to be saying goodbye to Mrs Smith, Mrs Kidd and Mr Robbins, we would like to thank them for their valuable contributions to school life and wish them all the very best for the future. At the same time, we are delighted to be welcoming new members to our team and to see some existing staff moving into new and exciting roles.

From January, Mrs Mourton will be joining our teaching team in preparation for teaching Elm Class during Mrs Erwood's maternity leave. We are pleased to be able to offer Mrs Mourton this opportunity to gain invaluable classroom experience while she continues to complete her degree in education.

Mr Gibbs will also be moving into a new role in January as our Welfare and Thrive Administrator. In this role, Mr Gibbs will support the administrative team with a particular focus on attendance, alongside providing pastoral and wellbeing support for pupils and families, with safeguarding at the heart of his work.

We are also delighted to welcome Mrs Johnson as a new Teaching Assistant and Mr Northrop as our new Site Officer. Both will begin their roles in the spring term, and we look forward to formally introducing them to the school community at that time.

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

At GCA, we continue to emphasise that strong attendance is one of the most important factors in supporting children's learning, confidence and long-term success. When children are in school every day and arriving on time, they are able to take full advantage of the rich curriculum and opportunities we offer. We have recently seen an increase in requests for "well-being days" at home; while we fully recognise the importance of emotional health, these should not replace regular school attendance. Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that children attend school consistently, and we appreciate your partnership in meeting this expectation.

Arriving on time is equally vital. The first part of the morning is when key learning takes place, including early reading, phonics, English warm-ups and maths retrieval quizzes. Missing these puts children at a disadvantage, as they lose essential practice, fall behind their peers, and often start the day feeling unsettled or rushed. Regular lateness can also disrupt classroom routines and make it harder for children to engage confidently in lessons.

- Thank you for your continued support in helping your child arrive each day, on time and ready to learn.
- Together, we can ensure every child has the best possible start to their school day — and every opportunity to thrive.

## UNIFORM- POLICY, LOST ITEMS AND SECOND HAND SALES

A gentle reminder to all families about the importance of following our school uniform policy, which helps promote a sense of belonging, pride and equality across our school community. Full details of the uniform expectations can be found on our school website, but please note the key points: children should only wear a small pair of simple stud earrings, which must be removed (not covered) for PE and sporting activities, and smart-enabled watches are not permitted in school.

Lost property is kept near the main office and is accessible for children to check at any time. We continue to find items left outside or in communal areas each day, so please use the half-term break as an opportunity to remind your child about the importance of looking after their belongings.

Throughout the spring term, we will also be hosting second-hand uniform sales — dates will be shared on Dojo. As always, if you are in need of uniform or support with sourcing items, please contact the school; we are here to help.

## PUPIL PREMIUM - COULD YOUR CHILD BE ELIGIBLE?

Pupil Premium is extra funding that helps schools support children's learning and wellbeing. Your child may be eligible if your family receives certain benefits, or if they have been eligible for Free School Meals at any point in the last six years.

Even if your child receives universal free meals (Reception–Year 2), it's still important to apply, as this funding makes a real difference in school.

You can find out more and apply here:

Government guidance and application: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Cambridgeshire County Council information: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/help-with-school-learning-costs/pupil-premium>

If you're unsure whether you're eligible, or would like help applying, please contact the school office — we're very happy to help.


# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## ONLINE SAFETY


Keeping safe online is an important part of our Computing curriculum at GCA, and children regularly learn about how to make sensible choices, stay kind, and protect their personal information when using the internet. However, staying safe online is a partnership between home and school. By staying informed and vigilant, parents and carers can play a vital role in helping children navigate the online world safely and responsibly.

The information below focuses on Minecraft, a game played by a large number of children at our school. It provides key facts and practical tips to help families understand the platform, set appropriate boundaries, and support children in enjoying the game safely.

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



There's a very good chance you've heard of Minecraft. The block building phenomenon is, arguably, the most beloved video game of all time which has managed to maintain its popularity since its first release back in 2011. Nine years later, it still has a huge userbase of 112 million people playing the game every month. Accessible to those 7+, Minecraft can be a gateway into a world of learning and exploration which encourages players to use their imagination to build three-dimensional worlds with virtual building blocks. While Minecraft is considered relatively safe generally speaking, there are some safety precautions parents may want to consider before allowing their children loose on the game.



### What parents need to know about MINECRAFT

#### OPEN TO HACKING

Hackers can be a real problem in any online game, including Minecraft. Some individuals can access other people's games to disrupt their play time, or even worse, access private details about players such as their names, email addresses, dates of birth and so on. It would be incredibly rare and unfortunate to encounter a player like this, but it does happen and must be taken as a serious risk.

#### RISK OF GRIEFING

Griefing is when someone purposely upsets another player during the game. This can be done by ruining somebody's creation or generally doing something to spoil someone's gameplay and can essentially amount to a form of cyberbullying. In open servers, or even private ones among friends, it can be difficult to keep track of who's saying what, and an innocent comment in one person's eyes could be seen as bullying by somebody else. Stealing supplies, destroying things that take hours to build and harassing innocent players can all be commensurate if care isn't taken.

#### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Most players aged 7 and over will be able to play the game comfortably and, whilst creating an account does ask you to input your date of birth for confirmation, there's no way to check if the information is correct nor to check someone's real identity. This could mean that children younger than 7 could access the game. However, what is more concerning is that adults pretending to be children could theoretically be using false information to access the game and be interacting with your child.

#### ADDICTIVE NATURE

Minecraft can be an incredibly exciting game but it can also be very addictive. Too much time on the game could impact on your child's behaviour, causing them to become irritable or angry when being asked to stop playing. This might suggest it might be time to enforce some time away from the game. Addictive behaviour can be compounded at a young age and encouraging gaming in moderation is always recommended.

#### 'SCARY' CHARACTERS FOR YOUNGER GAMERS

For the most part, Minecraft is not a scary game. Despite this, there are certain characters in the game that younger children in particular may find frightening. Creepers, zombies and various other 'badies' can be commonplace in some parts of the game and young minds may find it difficult to dissociate them from real life once they switch off the game.



## Safety Tips For Parents

#### BLOCK STRANGERS AND UNWANTED CONTACT

Despite the fact that private messages can no longer be sent in the game, strangers may still attempt to interact with your child. From the pause menu, players can block chat and friend requests from others in the game. This causes any profiles, email addresses and phone numbers to become automatically blocked, meaning it's harder for people you don't know to potentially contact your child.

#### LEARN FROM YOUTUBERS / TWITCH STREAMERS

There are a lot of Minecraft focused YouTubers and Twitch Streamers that offer a huge variety of fun, engaging content. Many of them focus on making videos specifically for younger audiences, which don't include bad language or anything scary. If you're unsure about the game, check out some of the biggest streamers and more importantly, ask your child about it. This will help you to understand what the game is about and also make sure that your children are watching age-appropriate content on line.

#### PLAY IN CREATIVE OR PEACEFUL MODES

Playing the game on Creative or Peaceful mode ensures that the experience is strictly safe. Peaceful mode allows children to explore with friends without having the survival element of normal Minecraft, while Creative mode allows imaginations to run wild with unlimited resources, encouraging creation of vast, personalised worlds. There really are no limits as to what can be accomplished and getting involved yourself can make it a great way to bond with your child and give you a long-term project to complete with them.

#### MONITOR GAME TIME

Being able to play on a wide variety of platforms can be beneficial however it can also make it more difficult to put the game down. Play time should be monitored and it's always a good idea to talk to your child if you feel they are spending too much time on the game or showing signs of addictive behaviour.

#### CREATE A PRIVATE SERVER

The best way to avoid unwanted strangers or griefer's in a server is to simply create your own. Private servers do exactly what they say on the tin by offering a safe, secure place for children to play and create with their friends, free from outside interference. They (and you) control who is allowed in the server and what kind of things they can do in it, making it the closest thing Minecraft offers to parental control.

#### LEARN TO PLAY YOURSELF


Minecraft is an incredibly easy game to pick up and play. Furthermore, it doesn't require an expensive console or computer, with versions available for smartphones and tablets. Learning to play yourself and playing alongside your child is the best way to understand the game and will help to put your mind at ease in respect of what your child is viewing and who they may be interacting with.



#### CREATE SERVER WHITELISTS

Username's you know to be safe, like your child's friends or relatives, can have their accounts whitelisted as safe. Essentially, this means that server moderators can create a community made up of people they know to be friendly and children will only be playing alongside people both they and you know, reducing any risk of contact with strangers or experiencing griefing.

### Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGBible. Starting gaming from a young age with his zib legs, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## IS MY CHILD WELL ENOUGH TO ATTEND SCHOOL?

Deciding whether your child is too unwell for school can be difficult. The NHS provides clear, helpful guidance on common illnesses and when children should stay at home to recover and prevent the spread of infection.

Read the NHS guidance here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If you're unsure, please don't hesitate to contact the school office for advice.

# IS MY CHILD TOO ILL FOR SCHOOL?

yes

until...

NHS

CHICKENPOX	At least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over.
DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING	48 hours after their last episode.
HIGH TEMPERATURE	If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.
IMPETIGO	Their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics.
MEASLES	4 days after the rash first appeared.
MUMPS	5 days after their swelling started.
SCABIES	They've had their first treatment.
SCARLET FEVER	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics.
WHOOPING COUGH	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics.



NO



CONJUNCTIVITIS	You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.
COUGHS & COLDS	It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold.
HAND, FOOT & MOUTH	If they seem well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.
HEAD LICE	There's no need to keep your child off school. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing your GP.
THREADWORMS	Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend treatment.
SORE THROAT TONSILLITIS	You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.
SLAPPED CHEEK	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious.