



The John Hampden School Newsletter

Issue Six Friday November 21st 2025

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It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.....

As we head towards December and the end of the Autumn Term, there is a growing sense of excitement throughout the school. This is always a special time in an infant school and we are all looking forward to the enjoyable activities and traditions that make this season so memorable for our children. This year feels particularly special for me personally, as it will be my first Christmas as Headteacher.

I am very much looking forward to experiencing all of the festive traditions of our school community and sharing in the joy, enthusiasm and sense of belonging that this time of year brings. This week, the rehearsals for the Foundation Stage Nativity have truly stepped up a gear, with songs, actions, and lines being polished beautifully. Behind the scenes, staff are also busy preparing for the Year One and Year Two Christmas performances, which promise to be just as magical. You should now have received letters regarding costumes - thank you in advance for your support with these. Festive party plans are well underway too, with each year group eagerly organising their celebrations. Meanwhile, preparations for the FJH Christmas Fayre are gathering pace, and we are very grateful to everyone involved for the time and enthusiasm they bring to this much-loved community event. Over the coming weeks, the school will continue to transform. Christmas decorations will begin to brighten our corridors and the sound of rehearsals and festive music will fill the air. Everywhere you look, there will be signs that Christmas is very much on its way!

Steph Parkinson - Headteacher



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For the Christmas Performances space in the hall is at a premium. Please note that you will be entering the hall up steps via a side route so please do not attempt to bring pushchairs into the school. Our pupils and staff work very hard to put on these performances and we would ask you, on this occasion, to make alternative arrangements for all younger siblings as they can find it difficult to sit still and quietly and can spoil the enjoyment for others. Your co-operation would be greatly appreciated.

The Friends of John Hampden Christmas Fayre is next weekend- Saturday 29th November at 12.00pm and I am sure that will really start to make us feel festive—my thanks to all the FJH committee for demonstrating, once again, their amazing organisational skills in the run up to this event. Also thanks to all the volunteers, governors and staff who will give up their time to run stalls—we hope to raise lots of money so do come along and support us. We are hoping that any money raised by the FJH this year can be used to purchase new resources for all year groups. This would make a huge difference to the opportunities we offer. We are incredibly lucky to have such an active PTA and we truly do appreciate the time and effort that so many volunteer committee members provide. Many of them are already very busy people and the staff, governors and pupils at the school would just like to say a really big **THANK YOU** for all their hard work.





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Christmas parties are planned for **Thursday 18th December**. We invite the children to come to school wearing party clothes/Christmas jumpers and suitable footwear on that day (the children will be going outside at playtimes so clothing needs to be appropriate for colder weather). We will be asking you to provide your child with their own Christmas party packed lunch on this day rather than the hot meal option and, as this is a special occasion, we are happy for them to have any food which you consider to be appropriate e.g. sweets, chocolate etc.

Each year we are amazed by the wonderful lunches that are provided. Lunchboxes are often specially decorated, some even contain particularly Christmassy items. (The FJH provide every child with a Christmas Cracker to enjoy at the party) If we are lucky, a very special visitor may arrive carrying a big sack of presents!





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Christmas Cards

As we head towards December we find many pupils wish to send Christmas cards to their friends in the school. We accommodate this by installing two Christmas post boxes which will be in position from Monday 1st December. One is positioned in the Foundation Stage Octagon area and the other one, for Key Stage One pupils, is positioned near the school office. If your child would like to send some cards this year please would you check the envelopes to ensure the cards can be easily sorted and distributed.

Each envelope needs to have the name and class name of the recipient clearly written on it. Unfortunately we are not able to provide parents with class lists, but I am sure your child will remember the names of their very close friends.

We will encourage all children who bring cards into school to post them in the post boxes because the children are always very excited when the Christmas Post arrives in their classroom. Regular deliveries are made in the days leading up to the end of term. **LAST POSTING DAY IS WEDNESDAY 17th DECEMBER** and final deliveries will be made on Thursday 18th December.

The following information may help you with envelope writing!

Foundation Stage	Year 1	Year 2
Caterpillars - Miss Burns	Squirrels—Mrs Bloxham & Miss Bell	Firecrests - Mrs McNally/Mrs Mannering
Ladybirds- Miss Fox	Hedgehogs - Mrs Norman/Mrs Burrows	Hérons - Mrs Bowman
Honeybees—Mrs Shrimpton	Badgers—Mrs Henderson and Miss Berry	Red Kites - Miss Tiffin





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Adverse Weather Conditions

On Wednesday we were all treated to a light flurry of snow, which certainly added to the wintery excitement around school! The children were delighted to see the outside areas briefly turn white and it was a lovely reminder that colder weather is now truly upon us. With that in mind, we wanted to take the opportunity to remind families of our winter weather procedures.

If we need to close the school this winter due to adverse weather conditions the following procedures will be used to inform parents.

1. A decision will be made about the school closure by 7.30am. This decision will be based on health and safety grounds, which may include not having enough staff at school to supervise our pupils.
2. By 7.45a.m the school website home page will be updated with closure details. Greatest Hits Radio will have been contacted and should announce our school closure at regular intervals throughout the morning. The Council's website will also list our school closure: www.buckscs.gov.uk
3. If the notices listed above have not been implemented then you are to assume the school will remain open.
4. With these three methods of communication in place, there should be no need for you to telephone the school asking whether we will be open or closed.
5. Should the school open but need to close earlier than 3.15p.m, we will contact you via text or telephone.



Please be assured that school closure will always be a last resort.

It is entirely the responsibility of the parent/carer to decide whether it is safe to travel to and from school in inclement weather and we respect the choices you make. As usual please inform the school by telephone or in writing if your child will be absent from school.



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Pupils Section:

On Wednesday 19th November we held another Open Morning at the school in preparation for a new intake of pupils in September 2026. Twelve of our Year 2 pupils acted as ambassadors for the school on this day and we thought you might like to hear what they said to their audience when we asked them what they would like to share about The John Hampden School.

Bella – At John Hampden school you are always cared for.

Mia – John Hampden is the best school with the best teachers.

Mila – It is amazing at The John Hampden because we all love to learn.

Isabelle – John Hampden is brilliant because there are lots of people who care for you.

Harry – I love all of the classrooms to learn in.

Wilbur – It is outstanding at our school because of the outstanding after school club.

Lacey – I love the John Hampden and am excited about doing the Nativity.

Rayaan – John Hampden is fabulous because everyday we learn new things.

Isla- John Hampden is the very best because we play and make new friends.

Jamie – John Hampden is the best school in the world with the best teachers.

Ethan - Every day is a good day at John Hampden because the teachers care for us and teach us things.

Frank – At The John Hampden we learn more and more each day.



We were so very proud of our ambassadors and they all received a 'proud cloud' from Mrs Parkinson



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Campus Safety

Thank you to everyone who supported the campus road safety check this week; the ongoing checks are necessary to reduce traffic and improve safety for our children. Nearly all parents were polite and respectful when reminded that unauthorised vehicles should not be driven onto campus and that no vehicles should be parked on double yellow lines / zig-zag or inconsiderately. We hope to be able to organise regular , unannounced monitoring, to ensure the campus remains safe for all users. Thank you to Mrs Hazel for all of her continued hard work with this.

To further improve safety, here are some reminders:

- Please only attempt to drive beyond the barrier if you are authorised to do so – be ready to show your permit.
- Do not allow passengers to get out on the road
- Pedestrians should use the footpaths – including adults
- Please do not park or wait in the drop off bay – doing so can create a traffic hazard
- Do not park on a double yellow line or hazard warning lines
- Please drive slowly – there is a 10mph limit for a reason



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Safety Week

This week is National Road Safety Week.



are encouraging all parents to check their car seats are safe.
Please see the below information on how to check your child's car seat and why it is important.

Why is this important?

Many parents are confused about the law on child seats and how it affects them.

This is why we have teamed up with **Brake, the road safety charity**, to let you know what the law says and why it is so important to use the right child seat and make sure you're all belted up before setting off!

UK law states that children should use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135cm tall, whichever comes first.

Brake recommends that children should use a correctly sized and fitted child seat until they are 150cm tall.

You can choose a child seat based on your child's height or weight.

You must only use a child seat if your car's seat belt has a diagonal strap, unless the seat is either:

- specifically designed for use with a lap seat belt; or
- fitted using ISOFIX anchor points.

You must deactivate front airbags before fitting a rear-facing baby seat in a front seat.

You must not fit a child seat in side-facing seats.

Booster cushions or backless booster seats should not be used for children who are under 125cm tall or weigh less than 22kg.

For UK law relating to child seats: www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules

For expert advice on choosing and fitting a child seat:
www.goodeggcarsafety.com



Today we have learned about road safety by taking part in a Beep Beep Day organised by Brake. Find out more at

www.brake.org.uk/beep

* Department for Transport (2024). Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report 2023 and associated data sets.
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In 2023, **401** child passengers aged 12 or under were killed or seriously injured in road crashes.* Using a correctly sized and fitted child seat significantly reduces the risk of a child dying or being seriously hurt if a crash happens.

- ✓ Never hold a child in your arms in a vehicle – use a modern child seat suitable for their size and weight until they are 150cm tall.
- ✓ Always use an EU-approved child seat with a label showing a capital E in a circle.
- ✓ Check manufacturers' labels and instructions carefully when buying a child seat, to make sure it is appropriate for your child's height and weight.
- ✓ Make sure the child seat is fitted at the correct angle and doesn't move. The harness should fit tightly with the chest clip level with your child's armpits.
- ✓ Follow the fitting instructions exactly. If possible, fit the seat in the middle of the back of your car. If you need to use a taxi, use one you can fit your child seat into.
- ✓ Ensure your child and all passengers are belted up before every journey – that includes you too!

Organised by **Brake**
the road safety charity



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Governor Section

Dropping off and picking up children from school may have felt different this week. In recognition of National Road Safety Week (17th-21st November) the Wharf Road Campus community have come together starting with a Day of Action on Monday, where we have showed, and hopefully what parents and career have witnessed, what a united approach can achieve. All week our staff, community partners at the Parish Council and the Police have come together to protect our children on the way to and from school, and we must now build on that momentum to keep everyone safe.

Road Safety Week is a vital national campaign that reminds us how dangerous our roads can be, especially for children. In Britain last year more than 3,300 children aged 7 and under were killed or injured on roads, with the charity Brake noting this equates to roughly nine young children harmed every day. Across Great Britain there were 29,711 people killed or seriously injured on the roads in 2023, underscoring why a focus around schools matter.

Our Day of Action - On Monday 17 November staff from all the schools on the Wharf Road campus, the local youth club, the swimming pool and the nursery joined forces for a campus-wide Day of Action. Together we encouraged parents who do not have a pre-approved reason to drive onto the campus to leave the car at home and walk, wheel or cycle instead. We were grateful for the support of the Buckinghamshire Community Board and for the presence of PCSOs from Thames Valley Police, who reinforced messages about careful driving and appropriate parking. The visible, friendly reminders made a real difference to the feel of the morning and helped reduce the feeling of the school access being dominated by cars. The majority of road traffic incidents that have occurred in Wendover over the last 10 years have involved young children being hit by drivers of vehicles.

Why active journeys matter - Building physical activity into the everyday journey to school benefits children's health, concentration and independence. Short walks scoots or cycles before the school day help children arrive calmer and more ready to learn, while also reducing traffic around school gates and lowering the risk of collisions. These small changes add up to safer streets and healthier children.

Clear rules and firm expectations - Unfortunately, a small minority let down the majority of families who follow the rules, and subsequently make it unsafe for everyone. The children at John Hampden are the youngest and most vulnerable of the schools on campus, and it is important that our parents role model good behaviour and set the standard. We have witnessed some shocking behaviour this week, people driving at excessive speeds on Wharf Road/Manor Road and onto the campus itself. This has been coupled with parking on pavements and opposite zig-zags that block visibility of the school crossing patrol, which is unsafe and illegal.

Permission is required to access the campus at any point — not just through the barrier. We have seen children being dropped off and walking on their own in the road when they should be using the footpath. The drop-off area outside the Memorial Hall should not be used by parents, and parking opposite the school is unacceptable, because it frequently blocks school buses and could prevent emergency services from accessing the campus. Permission to drive onto site will only be granted for staff and very specific, pre-authorised reasons.

What we ask of parents and carers - Please plan your journeys in advance, use the off-site facilities we have shared previously, and consider walking, wheeling or cycling whenever possible. We will continue to organise actions to prevent harm and there will be an ongoing presence from a committed group across the campus to keep these messages at the front of everyone's mind.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Day of Action — together we can make getting to and from our school safer for everyone.





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Welcome to Mathematics at The John Hampden School!

Now that the settling in period has successfully passed and we are looking forward to what the rest of this academic year holds, I thought I would introduce myself. I am Mrs Bowman and I am the Mathematics Lead at The John Hampden School. It is a post that I have been fortunate to hold for some time now, and it has been a privilege to oversee significant changes in the way that Mathematics is delivered in our setting over this period.

You may have noticed that Mathematics is taught in a very different way from when you were at school and this is a great thing! Pupils are encouraged to explore number, to increase their fluency and to notice patterns, so that they can apply this knowledge to key areas of the curriculum. We support the small steps, big impact approach to teaching Mathematics, where children are encouraged to use manipulatives, to build numbers and discuss their findings. Explicit links are made regarding the world around us, and children discuss why developing our Mathematical knowledge is so important for our daily lives, from learning the time, to working out change, to weighing ingredients out accurately and comparing temperatures in different climates.





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There is no doubt that myself as Mathematics Lead, the dedicated team of teachers throughout the school and our wonderful TAs and LSAs are integral to ensuring that your child is fully supported and feels successful during their Mathematical journey through this school. However, your positive involvement as parents is essential too! Here is why: At school we fully recognise that there is a significant correlation between Mathematical success and a child's confidence. From my own observations throughout the school and from NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics) based research, it is incredibly clear that children achieve when they are happy and confident in what they are doing. Therefore, we have worked very hard on creating a setting that is an explicitly safe place where children can get stuck, make mistakes, require support and find challenges difficult. It is this focus that enables children to take risks and learn from them, which builds confidence and in turn builds success.

The launch of NUMBOTS an online platform towards the end of last academic year for KS1 has proven to be very popular. Year 2 have been given details of how to login and soon Year 1 children will have the opportunity to gain access to this wonderful support tool too. This will be introduced to your child in Year 1 through a specifically designed lesson which shows your child the exciting elements of NUMBOTS. NUMBOTS helps fluency, nurtures a deep conceptual understanding of number and enhances a rapid recall of addition and subtraction facts.





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We are very keen for parents to become involved in supporting their child with Maths at home, but it can be difficult to know where to start. So below I have listed a few ideas which may help you going forward.

Positive Experiences	Firstly, it is essential that you try to refrain from discussing any negative experiences you had around Maths as a child. You would be surprised how easy it is for children to assume that because you did not like Maths or you found it hard, that they should feel the same. This is truly what we don't want, so focus on the positives!
What we are learning sheet.	Refer to the 'What We Are Learning Sheet' on the school's website. Details of what your child is being taught that week is recorded there, along with the rest of your child's subjects. You can use this to ask more specifically about their day.
Board and card games.	Games are a fun way of getting involved with Maths. Snakes and Ladders, Shut the Box, Uno, Top Trumps, Dominoes are a few that you can start with. Dobble although not number based helps to improve focus and concentration. It sharpens the neural pathways that help us to recognise similarities and differences which is an important part of developing number sense.
Cooking together.	Baking/cooking is a lovely way to become involved in everyday Maths and you get a delicious treat at the end of it. Measuring out ingredients together using scales. Setting the timer and temperature. How much more do we need? Using a recipe as a reference point also helps with reading, instruction writing and Maths all at the same time!
Money, money, money.	Nowadays we all use our debit and credit cards to pay for things and so the use of cash is becoming less and less. Despite this it is a really good idea to have a selection of coins and notes on hand to play with/ and use. Recognising coins even in Foundation Stage is important as using these coins helps to cement their worth. Going to the shop and buying something or creating your own shop at home is really useful and great fun too.
Helping around the home.	DIY is also a useful way of getting children involved in everyday Maths. Measuring a space for a bookcase or comparing the length of a piece of wood to see which is most suitable, is time well spent in order for measurement to become something your child is comfortable with. How many paces do you estimate it will take to get to the kitchen from the front door? Let's find out if you are right.
Journey to and from school.	On the way to school there are so many opportunities to engage in Mathematics. Looking at odd and even numbers on the doors of houses. Numbers on car number plates. Which is bigger? Which is smaller? Skip counting in 2s, 5s, 10s, 3s. Playing fizz buzz. How many red cars do you see on the journey?
Hundred squares.	Even using a simple hundred square to discuss one more, one less, or ten more, ten less is really useful.

These are just a few ideas and of course you may already have some favourites of your own.



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Maths Websites:

Here is a list of a suitable websites you may wish to use when supporting your child:

NUMBOTS	Numbots Game
BBC Bitesize	https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/z826n39
NRICH	https://nrich.maths.org/
Maths Zone	https://mathszone.co.uk/
ICT Games	https://ictgames.com/mobilePage/index.html
Math Playground	https://www.mathplayground.com/math-games.html
Topmarks	https://www.topmarks.co.uk/Search.aspx?Subject=16
Hit The Button	https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button
I See Maths	https://www.iseemaths.com/maths-games/
Numberblocks	https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/numberblocks
CBeebies Numeracy	https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/topics/numeracy



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Diary Dates

- 19th November – 9.15 am Open Morning for prospective EYFS (Nursery and FS) parents**
- 29th November – Stay and Play session – prospective parents and pupils Nursery and Reception 2026**
- 29th November – FJH Christmas Fayre 12.00pm – 3pm**
- 2nd December – 9.30 am EY Nativity**
- 2nd December – 10.30 am FS dress rehearsal**
- 3rd December - 9.30 am FS Nativity**
- 4th December – 9.30 am FS Nativity**
- 5th December – INSET day**
- 8th December – SEN reviews**
- 9th December – SEN reviews**
- 15th December – KSI Dress Rehearsal**
- 16th December - Year 2 Christmas Performance 9.30am**
- 16th December – Year 1 Christmas Performance 2.00pm**
- 17th December - Year 1 Christmas Performance 9.30am**
- 17th December – Year 2 Christmas Performance 2.00pm**
- 18th December – Christmas Parties**
- 19th December – School closes for holidays at 1.00pm**

