

Purwell Primary School

14th January 2025

☺ Happy New Year and welcome back to the start of
an exciting new term at Purwell School ☺

Curriculum information and homework expectations

Next week, parents/carers will receive via schoolcomms the details of the curriculum for their child's class for the Spring Term. With this information, will be the expectations that the teachers have with regards to homework. The extra learning children do at home is a valuable supplement to a child's development. There will be deadlines set that children must meet. Please help your children to meet these, regularly.

Children's Mental Health Week: 3rd February



The week beginning 3rd February marks Children's Mental Health Week, with this year's theme: Know Yourself, Grow Yourself. This event, organized by Place2Be, provides valuable resources for both schools and families. You can explore their family-friendly materials by visiting Families - Children's Mental Health Week.

At school, we will be running a variety of activities to promote mental health and wellbeing. We would greatly appreciate any support from parents and carers during this week.

Do you work in health or wellbeing?

Could you lead a fitness session, mindfulness activity, or similar workshop for the children?

If you're able to help, please contact Mrs. Mullan. Your involvement could make a big difference in creating a memorable and impactful week for our students. Thank you for your support!

Warm welcome to the staff team

This term, we are delighted to welcome back a familiar face and introduce a new member to our staff team. Mrs Nichol has returned to Year 4 following her maternity leave with baby Flora. Additionally, we warmly welcome Miss Watson to the EYFS team, stepping in for Mrs Rathbone, who departed at the end of last term.

Governing Body Update

At last night's governing body meeting, we were thrilled to welcome two new governors to the board. With their arrival, the governing body is now at full capacity, strengthening their ability to provide robust support to the school. Even in their first meeting, the new governors contributed insightful questions and ideas, offering great promise for the future.

The agenda included reports from the Headteacher and Chair, followed by finance and budget monitoring. Governors also reviewed the educational contracts the school holds with Herts for Learning, ensuring continued value and effectiveness.

One highlight of the meeting was the review and approval of a new policy focused on staff mental health and well-being, reinforcing our commitment to supporting the entire school community.

We look forward to the positive impact these developments will have on our school.

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Problems Applying for Reception places

We have been made aware that the admissions team may be contacting some parents who have applied for a Reception place at our school, asking them to reapply due to a technical issue with their admissions software.

If you have applied for a Reception place with us, please be aware that you might receive a call from a withheld number. We recommend answering these calls, as it may be the admissions team providing instructions on how to reapply for your child's place for September 2025.

If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the admissions team directly.

Clubs for the Spring Term

In addition to our lunchtime football club (Wednesday Years 3/4, Thursday Years 5/6), gymnastics club (Years 4/5/6 Monday, Years 1/2/3 Tuesday) and Hama beads Years 3/4/5/6 (Wednesday), the afterschool clubs running for the first half of the Spring term are, cheerleading (Years 4/5/6 - Mondays), chess Years 2/3/4/5/6 (Mondays) and netball Years 4/5/6 (Wednesdays). We will also be starting a lunchtime badminton club Years 4/5/6 (Fridays). These clubs will all commence from the week beginning Monday 20th January. Cookery club also takes place on Mondays after school Years 3/4/5/6 and commenced this week. Yoga continues to be offered on Wednesday mornings via a private instructor (8am to 8:45) and started last week. Cycling will resume on Tuesdays after half term.

We hope all children who attended clubs last term will wish to continue but please contact the office if you would like your child to be added to, or removed from, any club register.

Sports Report

Cycling - We've got an exciting half term coming up in terms of racing, with 3 events now on the calendar. Riders can take part in; The Eastern League race day at Milton Country Park on Sunday 26th January (<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/308701/Cambridge-Junior-CC---Eastern-League-2425-Round-10>) from 8.30am - 11am

The Ashwell Muddy Monsters race day on Saturday 1st February from midday to 3pm

The Hitchin Muddy Monsters race day at Butts Close on Saturday 22nd Feb from 9am - 11.30am

Club wise we're still waiting for the light (and temperature to warm up) and will be recommencing after February half term.

Football - There are a number of exciting fixtures on the horizon as the seasonal fixtures begin again at the end of January. We're pleased to have secured additional friendlies for our girls' team and are also very much looking forward to our Year 6 footballers representing the school as mascots at Hitchin Town's home fixture v St Ives on Saturday 22nd February. Club will resume at lunchtimes during WC 20th January.

Netball - We have a range of rallies and fixtures coming up and will be resuming after school club during WC 20th January, if we are experiencing adverse weather club will still go ahead after school and we'll move it into the hall.

Cricket - Club members, don't forget to sign yourselves up for your Middlesex memberships so that you can join us on one or both of our team outings during the summer.

<https://www.middlesexccc.com/page/junior-members-clubhouse>

School closures - Winter 2025

As part of the school's planning for emergencies, parents are reminded that incidents that necessitate school closure include such things as extreme weather and loss of essential electrical, water or heating services. Details of school closures will be texted to parents via Schoolcomms. They will also be displayed on the front page of the school website and on Twitter. On days when the weather conditions are poor, but the school is open, parents are advised to walk to school, if possible, and, for those driving, it is advisable to park on Purwell Lane or Kingswood Avenue and walk the remainder. We hope you appreciate that the decision to close is never made lightly, as the safety and welfare of our children, school staff and parents/carers is of paramount importance, and no one would like to see this compromised.

Christmas Clothing Donations

We are seeking donations of Christmas jumpers, T-shirts, and festive dress-up clothes. If you have any items you no longer need after the festive season, please consider donating them. Simply hand them in to Mrs. Lancaster at school.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Taking holidays during term time

We kindly remind parents to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Such absences disrupt your child's learning and can impact the overall school environment. The government has recently introduced a new national framework for penalty notices regarding unauthorised term-time holidays. These measures are now in effect. For further details, please refer to the information provided below. To assist with your planning, the term dates for the next academic year are listed below. We encourage all families to check these dates before booking any holidays. Thank you for your support in prioritising your child's education.

The New National Framework for Penalty Notices

From 19 August 2024, a new national framework for Penalty Notices regarding school attendance has been introduced across all schools in England. This ensures consistency in addressing unauthorised absences.

Threshold for Penalty Notices:

A Penalty Notice must be considered for any child with 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. These absences do not need to be consecutive and can include any combination of unauthorised absences. For example, a single 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet this threshold. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years.

Penalty Notice Fines:

First Offence:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

£160 per parent, per child if paid between 22 and 28 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years):

£160 per parent, per child with no reduced rate. Payment must be made within 28 days.

Third and Further Offences (within 3 years):

No Penalty Notice will be issued. Cases will be taken directly to the Magistrates' Court, where fines can reach up to £2,500, and criminal records may result.

This framework reinforces the importance of consistent school attendance. Please ensure absences are authorised by the school to avoid fines. If you have any questions or require further clarification, feel free to contact us.

PSA News

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Christmas Shop, Raffle and bought a mulled wine and mince pies!

Upcoming events -

- February - Doughnut sale
- March - Spring disco
- May - Plant & Cake sale
- June - Summer Picnic and Music event

Exact dates will be confirmed in the next newsletter.

Purwell Party Pack - Don't forget if you have a party coming up soon please think about hiring the pack - it helps raise money for the school and is a planet friendly option. £5 per hire + £1 damage deposit. Email the PSA to book!

Next PSA meeting - Wednesday 15th January, 8pm, Purwell Community Room

Dates for Spring Term 2025

Monday 6 th January	School closed for Inset Day
Tuesday 7 th January	Pupils return to school
17 th - 21 st February	Half-term
Wednesday 26 th March	Parent Consultations
Thursday 27 th March	Parent Consultations
Friday 4 th April	1:30pm End of term assembly with Easter singing
	Last day of term (2pm finish)

Dates for Summer Term 2025

Tuesday 22 nd April	School closed for Inset Day
Wednesday 23 rd April	Pupils return to school
Monday 5 th May	May Bank Holiday
26 th May-30 th June	Half-term
Thursday 26 th June	Sports Day
Friday 27 th June	School closed for Inset Day
Thursday 10 th July	Meet the teacher and Secondary transfer day for Y6
Wednesday 23 rd July	Last day of term (2pm finish)

Academic Year 2025/26

Autumn Term 2025

Wednesday 3 rd September	School closed for INSET day
Thursday 4 th September	Children return to school
27 th Oct- 31 st October	Half-term
Monday 3 rd November	School closed for INSET day
Friday 5 th December	School closed for Occasional day
Friday 19 th December	Last day of term

Spring Term 2026

Monday 5 th January	School closed for INSET day
Tuesday 6 th January	Children return to school
16 th - 20 th February	Half-term
Friday 27 th March	Last day of term

Summer Term 2026

Monday 13 th April	Children return to school
25 th to 29 th May	Half-term
Monday 1 st June	School closed for INSET day
Friday 3 rd July	School closed for INSET day
Thursday 23 rd July	Last day of term