



SPRING COMMON ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

20th December 2023

Contact us: office@springcommon.cambs.sch.uk or 01480 377403



From the Head Teacher

We started the new school year with a refined focus on learning. The classes had been tweaked to enable closer T&L strategies to all the needs in the room. This change of approach has allowed classes to truly work within our curriculum pathways. As always, we continue to reflect and change as necessary to ensure the best experiences to our learners, and welcome parental views of our offer.

Over this term we have utilised opportunities to be involved in the community. Including reflection on Remembrance Day and recently involving many of our KS3/4 students singing Christmas carols in the market square. As you read this, we would have recently opened up the school for our annual Christmas Fair.

Organised by our students and is always a fun event for our younger pupils.

I continue to be proud of the achievements our young people make. Many have overcome anxiety in this changeable time of year and have continued to shine in school assemblies and happy to share their learning to guests and visitors.

Finally, as we reflect on the term and look forward to the new year. I wish Rebecca all the best in her new role as Head Teacher. She has been able to be in school and enable a comprehensive transition and she will be able to continue Spring Common Academy's commitment to offering a quality provision to our community.

Merry Christmas to you and your families - Alex



From the new Head Teacher January 2024

It has been fantastic to meet pupils and students again across the school this week and see the lovely Christmas activities going on.

I am delighted to inform you that Spring Common Academy has a new Deputy Head starting in January 2024. Leigh Aitken has been appointed to the post after a rigorous and robust process. I am sure you will join me in congratulating him in his achievement. We have also appointed two new Assistant Head Teachers Sam Buck and Tom Dougherty to start in January 2024, alongside current Assistant Head Teacher, Mandy Walker. Together with Leigh and myself, this will be the Leadership Team of Spring Common Academy.

As the term draws to a close, I am wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I hope you have a peaceful break. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all on Thursday 4th January to start a new and exciting term together.

Best wishes,
Rebecca



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Trust end of term message – Kim Taylor

I would like to thank our staff across the Trust for such hard work and continued commitment to our children and young people. Our staff continue to be the most important part of the deliver an effective and quality service as we value the amazing talents of our staff. During this year, staff faced national industrial action that was settled about teacher pay and support staff pay awards. There is understanding about the cost of living for everyone and for parents.

Our Central Team for Horizons Education Trust continues to expand and develop in experience in response to the growth of the Trust. Please find time to look on our website as these people our having a significant impact and supporting our schools.

We introduce a new Head Teacher for Spring Common Academy, Rebecca Greig and Deputy Head Teacher, Leigh Aitken appointed for January 2024. Rebecca will communicate with parents and guardians to keep in touch with you. Alex Tomkins is leaving us and professionally he has worked hard to hand over detailed strategic plans and school operations and developments to provide continuity for Rebecca. As CEO I will ensure this transition is smooth on behalf of the Trust and as provide continuity and reassurance.

Progress with our project to open Prestley Wood Academy at Alconbury Weald is on track for September and involved our Head Teacher designate, Caroline Place. We have concluded our S10 consultation and this report is on our Horizons Education Trust website. Recently we concluded all our design finishes and I can assure that the new building will be amazing and mirror the established provision at Spring Common. If you recall CCC did provide a Capital build project to enable Spring Common to improve facilities too.

Progress with Riverside Meadows has included the opening of a beautiful building at Barton Road, Wisbech to extend provision for SEMH pupils. This site has additions to the staffing team and includes two new Assistant Head Teachers. We are now actively working with both Co – Head Teachers to improve the building and facilities at Almond Road, St Neots.

We close the autumn term in a strong position as a Trust. This is only possible with external pressures around us as we navigate our path with the determination of the Trust with new Chair of Trustees, Mark Williams and our valued staff in our schools.

Consultations:

Thank you for taking the time to respond to our consultations. Our recent consultation asked a question about term dates, we accepted the decision, and have issued standardised term dates available on our websites.

Trust:

We would like to acknowledge that Judy Ward, one of our members, is retiring to focus on her family and travels. We would like to wish her well.

Happy Christmas and a warmest wish to everyone for the New Year, 2024.
Kim Taylor

Dr Kim Taylor OBE – CEO Horizons Education Trust.



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Early Years to 5

After a really busy start to the year the children settled in well to their classes and staff teams have had a productive term.

The children have enjoyed learning and some have had trips out.

We have welcomed new pupils and staff to our ever growing Spring Common Academy family.

The Christmas performances put on by the classes have been amazing, showcasing all the hard, varied experiences and work our children do. I am very proud of them all.

The Christmas tree in our reception was decorated by all our students and was also use as a sensory opportunity.

I would like to thank you all for your continued support and wish you and your families a very happy Christmas holiday and see you back in January for a new year ready to learn.



Mandy

Years 6 to 11

As ever, our young people have made an incredible start to the school year, with lots of opportunities for them to showcase their achievements as learners and their growing maturity as young adults. As a staff team, we couldn't be prouder of how well they are doing. There have been so many fantastic achievements this term which our young people have been instrumental in achieving – including being awarded Healthy School status, and participating in the Huntingdon Christmas Market lights switch on. Our many visitors are always impressed by the calm and productive atmosphere around the school.

Our pupils continue to impress us with their progress, and it has been wonderful to see so many more classes accessing the community, not just as this extends their opportunities for learning, but also as this allows them to be ambassadors for our wonderful school.

Once again this term ends with a flurry of festive fun, and I know that the hard work classes have put into their Christmas performances and the Christmas Fayre paid off handsomely. I hope you all have a restful break and we look forward to everyone's safe return in January.

Take care! Leigh



Years 10 to 14

As we bid farewell to the Autumn Term, it is a moment for reflection and gratitude. The past few months have been a journey of growth, resilience, and shared accomplishments.

Our P16 students have demonstrated remarkable dedication to the current work placement project at Mick George, this has provided invaluable ongoing exposure to a professional work environment. All students involved have been excited to attend every two weeks and submerge themselves in the culture of this successful company.

Key stage 4 classes have impressed me immensely with their maturity and attitude towards work and local community visits, such as the Magpas Air Ambulance Day and the recently successful Christmas Fair.

Our Macmillan coffee morning, Moving On Evening and Christmas Performance were all a success and provided an opportunity for parents and pupils to share in the delight of our amazing school community.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Tom





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Please see our Horizons Education Trust website for a link to the latest updates on the very exciting build of our sister school Prestley Wood Academy in Alconbury Weald, which is still on track for completion in September 2024. I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and New Year!

Caroline Place Head Teacher Designate, Prestley Wood Academy

Early Years



We have had a fantastic first term learning all about ourselves and looking at all of the different colours in the world around us. We have had lots of fun making colourful art using different colours and textures while mark making. We have then took part in lots of fun Christmas activities. We have even had a go at painting and creating our own colourful mural using a variety of different materials and colours. Lots of fun!

1EB



In 1EB we have had a fantastic Autumn term. Everyone in the class has been working incredibly hard to build relationships and learn lots of new things. We have been very busy learning about colours and shapes this half term, it has been wonderful to see our lovely learners take the lead in activities and show off both their curiosity and creativity.

The 1EB team can't wait to see what we all get up to in the New Year. Merry Christmas everyone!



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1DG



What busy little superstars we have been in 1DG this term! We have based our learning around the theme of Traditional Tales. We listened to, acted out, created arts and crafts and enjoyed sensory experiences based on the stories of Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel & Gretel. Our main focus in Maths has this term has been on number facts and finding the total. The Autumn season is also a great time to celebrate national days. We have learnt about Halloween traditions, why we see poppies in November, and of course enjoyed Christmas

decorations and celebrations! We hope you have a lovely Christmas and will see you in the New Year.

2SG



In 2SG we have enjoyed all our learning experiences this term. We have been extremely busy in class and went on an outing to the Riverside Hub with all our friends which was an opportunity to socialise with our friends and explore.

We are now looking forward to returning to school after our Christmas break for more learning. We wish you all a very merry Christmas!



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2SW



2SW have had a great term leading up to the festive season. We have built upon our skills of sharing and turn taking as well as a big focus on communication, exchanging PECs and using our voices. It has been lovely to see how the children have continued to engage in school routines and still have a high love of the lessons and learning that takes place each day. We would all like to wish you a very merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

2TS



2TS have had great fun this term learning about the Ancient Greek Myths of *Icarus*, *Theseus and the Minotaur*, *Odysseus and the Trojan Horse* and *King Midas and the Golden Touch*. We have completed sequencing, comprehension and sentence structure work based on these exciting texts. We have learnt about how things are different today than they were in the past, and have created fantastic Art work linked to our topic, including these brilliant crowns.

Have a brilliant Christmas and we look forward to an amazing 2024 together.



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2CW



2CW have had an awesome term! We have been writing our own parts of stories, have been learning about self-help and first aid skills, and have recently been getting ready for Christmas and learning our Nativity Song!

The class also showed off their brilliant road safety skills on a walk to the shops and back!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

2CR



2CR have made fantastic progress regarding transitions and managing anxiety related to them this term. Our greatest achievement is that we managed to go and see Santa during a day trip. Our pupils were simply amazing and very well behaved!

We are so proud of them all!

We wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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2AM



This term 2AM have focused on the topic "Greek Myths" learning about their cultures through sensory and creative tasks such as building temples.

We have also had time to focus on Christmas time, lots of singing and creative decoration has been done the last couple of weeks, not forgetting to mention about Children in need! What a fun day!

We wish you a merry Christmas!

2CS

This term we have been reading *The Smartest Giant in Town* and *The Three Little Pigs* using sensory stories and sound stories. Here we are using the resonance board to hear the different sounds in *The Three Little Pigs* story.

Wishing you and yours a happy Christmas and New Year!





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LOWER PMLD



Both PMLD classes managed to get out before the Christmas holidays to visit a garden centre to look at all the Christmas decorations and wander around the aisles experiencing all the smells, sights and sounds relating to Christmas. The students enjoyed looking at the twinkly lights, touching the decorations and Christmas trees.

It has been a long term but the children have had lots of sensory experiences. This week, both classes participated in Christmas productions which were lovely and got us in the mood for Christmas!

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year!

UPPER PMLD





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3MM



3MM have had a very good autumn term. The pupils have settled in really well making progress in all learning areas. We have enjoyed focusing our learning around 'The little red hen' sensory story and have linked it with an educational visit going to the Sacrewell Farm to see the farm animals in real life. We have also been very successful in being able to visit the Regional College on a weekly basis and experience out of classroom learning using vending machines and spending social time in the café. 3MM have also had fun taking part in the Christmas performance at the church this year for the first time making unique memories. Happy Christmas to you all!

3DW



What an action-packed term 3DW have had! We have been busy learning about our knights and castle theme, which included lots of sensory stories and experiences, including stories about Robin Hood. Pupils have enjoyed exploring forces in science to investigate how push and pull work, participated in events such as Remembrance Day, road safety week and Children in Need activities. We have been on educational trips within the local community to develop functional life skills and preparation for adulthood and see people who help us in the community.

We will be finishing the term off with our amazing Christmas performance and a well-deserved wellbeing day in school for the pupils to be pampered! Thank you for all your continued support and we wish you all a safe and healthy break.



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3MuL



3MuL have had a wonderful term learning about conflict and World War 2. As part of this work pupils created a silhouette of a soldier out of wood, which other members of the school could put poppies on for Remembrance Day. Pupils have also had enriching opportunities such as fire safety and how to start an open fire which was then rewarded by being able to have toasted marshmallows and s'mores.

On the run up to Christmas we were fortunate enough to be able to go to Dobbies to collect a Christmas Tree that Hazel had won for the school. Pupils enjoyed looking at the different trees they could choose and then helping to wrap it so that it could be transported back to school.

It has been a tiring but fun term, and we are all looking forward to a Christmas break.

3DH



This half term we have continued to work on our topic of World War 2. The pupils have written their own poems about War in Literacy and in Maths we have worked on solving Maths problems and the basics of multiplication. In PSHE we have learnt about ways of keeping calm in social situations and in Humanities we have researched the Blitz.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas!



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3SBx



3SBx have had another busy term. We have continued our Knights and Castles topic focusing on Robin Hood and his merry men.

We have also practised a range of independence skills, laying a table, putting our coats on, dressing independently and making a cup of tea.

We had lots going on during the last week or so such as the Christmas concert, Christmas lunch, and the Christmas Fair.

3SBx would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

4SB



This term class 4SB have been getting out in the community and developing our skills.

Pictured top left, the class visited the local Methodist church to access the wider local area. Whilst here we interacted with the volunteers, played games and explored personal safety.

4SB have also been running the local shop in recent weeks. This has been a magnificent success for our students. Everyone has played part in ensuring the shop runs successfully and everyone leaves with a full stomach! Running the shop has required us to use practical money skills, communicate effectively, adhere to health & safety protocols and consider future employment options.

Class 4SB have well and truly earned their Christmas break! Stay safe and have fun!



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4VC



This half term, 4VC have been extremely busy both in school and out of school. We had a great visit to the Cambridge Junction, Magpas Air Ambulance and our fortnightly church visits too. One of the highlights was organising a Bake Sale for Children In Need, our KS4 Christmas meal that we all helped to cook and of course our Christmas Fair. Thank-you again for all your support this term. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

P16RG



This half term we have been busy with our ASDAN Life skills Challenge activities. We have been making model robots, exploring myths, making choices on different devices, engaging in water-based sensory experiences, measuring objects and exploring emotions.

We have also been for a sensory walk, explored different tastes in the Life Skills Suite and some of us have visited college whilst some of us have visited town.

More recently, we have been getting into the festive spirit by making props as well as rehearsing for our Christmas Sing-A-Long and visited the Cambridge Junction to watch their production of Hansel and Gretel. Happy Christmas to you and your families!



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P16TD

Post 16 students recently participated in a Travel Training Day. The initiative aims to enhance their independence, develop essential life skills, and broaden their horizons beyond the classroom. All students love opportunities to explore nearby cities and gained a great deal from the experience.

Some of our students have been busy on a regular bi-weekly work placement with Mick George, this has been an engaging and worthwhile partnership so far and we hope to continue this into the New Year.

In other subjects we have been exploring Myths and Legends, from our reading and research students have produced their own mythical story along with exploring character creations. We wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year!

P16LC



P16LC have been visiting the Methodist Church Community Cafe on Wednesday mornings. The students have taken turns to take orders from staff and their peers. They have also helped tidy cups and glasses away too, as well as interacting with each other and volunteers and playing games with them. We would like to wish you all a happy Christmas!



Spring Common Stars & Rotary Club Stars

In conjunction with the Rotary Club, we make a special effort to celebrate our pupils who have consistently demonstrated **good citizenship by helping or supporting others, the school, the wider community, or the environment**. The Rotary Club work to see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in themselves. This term's winners were:

Autumn 2023

- ☆ **Niall C-G**, for always brightening up everybody's day with his smile and sense of humour.
- ☆ **Sofia M-O** for always having a helpful attitude in school.
- ☆ **Robert A** for always showing a caring nature towards other children and adults in the school, having a helpful attitude in school and helping to maintain safety and well-being of everyone. Robert is one of the kindest and most good natured students you could hope to work with, with abundant enthusiasm, who makes consistent effort, and has good attitudes in school. He also brightens up everybody's day with his smile!
- ☆ **Othniel N** for his politeness at all times, greeting friends and staff on his arrival at school; for settling so well into his new school environment; for showing a fantastic attitude to work, and for being able to support his friends when they are feeling sad.
- ☆ **Ethan S** for being consistently polite and courteous.
- ☆ **Sofia H** for giving great advice to her peers on how to solve problems and tricky social situations.
- ☆ **Morgan M** for having done such a great job this academic year, not only improving his communication skills massively, but also developing his social and personal skills. He is such a brilliant role-model for the rest of pupils in the class.
- ☆ **Tyler W** for bringing a smile to all our faces and making great relationships with the adults and children and class.
- ☆ **Malachi A** for taking part in all activities and being a general super star!
- ☆ **Jack C** for always going out of his way to play and interact with all his peers, both in the classroom and beyond.

Well done to our stars! We look forwards to seeing who will be our stars next year!



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We would like to express our thanks to the Kimbolton CSU students who chose to fundraise on our behalf. Students ran a car wash, and have donated £100 to Spring Common Academy. The school council have voted to use the money to buy more balls for playtime!



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TERM DATES 2023-24



***Autumn Term 2023 (1 September to 20 December)**

Staff training day: Friday 1 September

Staff training day: Monday 4 September

Autumn term opens: Tuesday 5 September

Half term: 23 – 27 October

Staff training day: Monday 30 October

Autumn term closes: Wednesday 20 December

Spring Term 2024 (4 January to 28 March)

Spring term opens: Thursday 4 January

Staff training day: Friday 16 February

Half term: 19 - 23 February

Spring term closes: Thursday 28 March

Good Friday Bank Holiday Friday 29 March

Summer Term 2024 (15 April to 22 July)

Summer term opens: Monday 15 April

May Bank Holiday Monday 6 May

May Half term: 27 May – 31 May

Staff training day: Friday 5 July

Summer term closes: Monday 22 July



*Riverside Meadows Academy - Wisbech Green, will be opening a new building and shall have a planned staggered start to Autumn term 2023.



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TERM DATES 2024-25



***Autumn Term 2024 (3 September to 20 December)**

Staff training day: Tuesday 3 September
Staff training day: Wednesday 4 September
Autumn term opens: Thursday 5 September
Half term: 28 October – 1 November
Staff training day: Monday 4 November
Autumn term closes: Friday 20 December

Spring Term 2025 (6 January to 4 April)

Spring term opens: Monday 6 January
Half term: 17 - 21 February
Staff training day: Monday 24 February
Spring term closes: Friday 4 April

Summer Term 2025 (22 April to 23 July)

Summer term opens: Tuesday 22 April
Early May Bank Holiday: 5th May
May Half term: 26 May – 30 May
Staff training day: Friday 11 July
Summer term closes: Wednesday 23 July



*Prestley Wood Academy will be opening a new building and shall have a planned, staggered start to Autumn term 2024.