



Spring Common Academy May Half Term Newsletter

A message from Rebecca, Head Teacher

Early Years Outdoor Provision....

What an exciting first half of the Summer term it has been with improvements to the Early Years outdoor provision, new communication boards for the playgrounds and Ofsted!

We have started to improve the outdoor provision in the Early Years, with significant help from local company Mick George. So far we have put in:

- Two low wooden A-frames for climbing and balance
- New construction kits
- 4 new small wooden sheds to store resources (to go in asap)
- Den building kit
- Tyres & traffic cones
- Willow letters and numbers
- Mirrors
- Threading equipment
- Birdfeeders
- Relocated bench from another area in school
- Early years climbing wall

- Willow trees cut back to allow for significant work to take place building a 1m x 8m raised bed for pupils to dig and plant in. Here are some before and after photos!

Before.....







After.....









As you will be aware, we had our Ofsted inspection on May 7th & 8th. It was a positive experience and we will happily share the report as soon as we are able to.

Thank you to all pupils and parents/carers who completed the surveys or met with the inspector Nathan.

We will look forward to seeing you after half term on Monday 3rd June. Enjoy the break.

Best wishes,

Rebecca

A message from Leigh, Deputy Head Teacher

It is a truth almost universally acknowledged, that the relationships our pupils have with staff and with each other are second to none. It has been an absolute pleasure to see so many fabulous interactions between members of the Spring Common community over the past few weeks, and to hear from many of the pupils how much they value their school.

Some pupils are becoming understandably anxious as we head towards the end of the academic year, but staff are working hard to make sure our handover to new class teams is as seamless as possible.

Although we have been dodging downpours and showers, the weather is definitely getting better. Our young people have been getting the opportunity to get out and about more often, and we are ensuring that our curriculum supports them to stay safe in the community. Lots of our classes have done some terrific work on road and water safety this year!

With a chance that we will be seeing more sunshine, please take the opportunity to think about the five sun safety S's: slip on a t-shirt, slop on sunscreen, slip on a hat, slide on sunglasses, stay in the shade.

Take care! Leigh

More on sun safety - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

More on water safety - <https://www.rlss.org.uk/pages/category/water-safety-information>

More on road safety - <https://www.think.gov.uk/>

A message from our Assistant Head Teachers

Tom - Assistant Head Teacher KS4 & Post16 and Designated Safeguarding Lead

As we reach the halfway point of this term, it's a pleasure to reflect on the remarkable achievements and events that have shaped our Key Stage 4 and Post 16 provisions so far. One of the standout events has been the Belgium Crossing Borders trip to St. Niklaas. This adventure provided our students with a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a new culture, build international friendships, and

enhance their global awareness. The success of this trip is a testament to the dedication of our staff and the eagerness of our students to embrace new experiences.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled about the upcoming KS4 Summer Fair. This annual event promises to be a celebration of our strong school community. With a variety of stalls and activities, it's an occasion that highlights the creativity and collaborative spirit of our students.

After the half term, the excitement will continue with the commencement of Post 16 work experience placements. Offering them invaluable insights into the working world and a chance to apply their skills in real-world settings.

Enjoy your half term break - Tom

Mandy - Assistant Head Teacher Early Years & KS1

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone for their support and kind words during our recent visit with Ofsted.

As we approach the end of the first half of the summer term, the weather finally seems to be picking up with dry days and sunshine. This is meaning we can spend more time enjoying our new improved outside area. Thank you to the staff for all their hard work and to Mick George, who have kindly completed a lot of work on the improvements.

The pupils this term have enjoyed their topic work and have produced some amazing work to showcase their learning.

Have a restful break - *Mandy*

Sam - Assistant Head Teacher KS2 & KS3

Yet another busy half term has passed. It's been great to see so many key stage 2 and 3 classes access the local community. The skills gained from these off-site adventures underpin everything we do at Spring Common Academy – setting our students up for life beyond the school gates.

I am very excited to see what unfolds during 'International Communication Day'. I have no doubt classes will be undertaking a wide variety of exciting and meaningful activities and this will be well supported by parents and carers alike.

Behaviour continues to present as happy and calm across the school. When I visit classes it's brilliant to see all our students engaging in their learning. A major factor in this is due to high level of support adults provide, combined with high expectations for all and continuous reflection.

As always, we will be transitioning into our new classes for the last two weeks of the school year. The purpose of this is to alleviate anxieties and allow us to hit the ground running in September. However, before that it's vital we have the best 6 weeks possible in our current classes. I'm expecting to see a lot of fun, smiles and learning as we move into the final weeks of school.

Have a great half term and a well-earned rest - *Sam*

A message from Amanda, Swimming Teacher

Our students love the swimming lessons we offer at Spring Common Academy and it is a pleasure to see the progression and confidence of the students grow. I would like to give a special shout out to the following students who have shown great improvement over this last term - Oliver B 1DG, Harry H 2TS, Frankie L 2TS & Henry P 2SG.





A Thank you from Belgium



Some of our Post16 students were lucky enough to go on an exchange trip to Belgium this term and experience school and life outside of the UK. The trip was very successful and below is what one of the Teachers, Pieter, had to say.

"I'd like to say a big thank you to everybody once more for the really amazing five days we spent together. Your students were outstanding, and from the emotional reactions on the train platform on the morning they were leaving, I really think we can deduce that it has had quite an impact on both English and Belgian youngsters. The cooperation between the two sets of teachers also really went well and it was amazing to hear that all three of the Teachers who joined the students want to start playing a bigger part in the exchange going forward. We really need many shoulders to keep on carrying this wonderful 'Crossing Borders'-project!"













Total Arts Film Festival with Cambridge Junction

Students at Spring Common Academy have been working with Cambridge Junction Creative Learning Team, and filmmaker Pete Harmer to co-create a short film entry into our Total Arts Film Festival : Big Trouble Little Pictures on the 18th & 19th June at The Light Cinema Cambridge.

Our pupils have devised a story, written a script, acted and directed a short film across 3 days. The whole class was engaged in the activity and they absolutely loved it!





Creative Writing Superstar

1 One day...	Gnomeo and Juliet go to the mount duns oasis land. They travel there by boat. It was a sunny but cold day. There was a strange noise in the distance.
They meet / see...	They see Narnette and they are happy. They meet Eggs, hot stone and Gnomeo and Juliet Feel excited. The birds were singing in the trees.

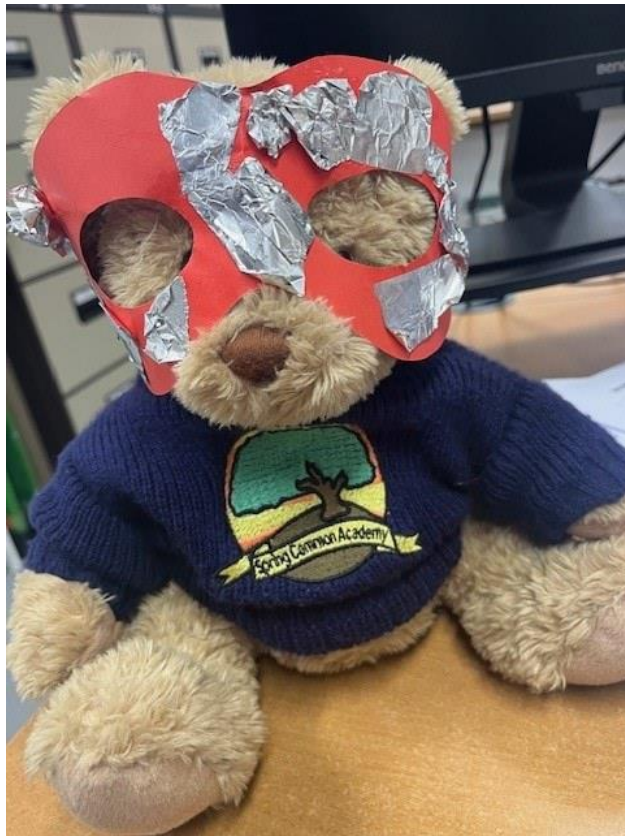
Class 3DH have been preparing their own version of the 'Gnomeo & Juliet' story in recent weeks. We started the learning process by brainstorming our ideas, after which we formulated our story plans. This week we are in the writing phase. Freddie has worked particularly hard on the first part of his story and we thought we would share it with you.

Well done Freddie - You should be super proud of your impressive work! I am that impressed by it that it is in my office, framed for all to see! Keep up the amazing work - *Rebecca*

Transitioning to Spring Common Academy

We currently have a student, Finley, who is transitioning to Spring Common Academy each week with his key workers. Finley has been looking after the Spring Common Academy bear each week and has been making him some lovely face masks. One is a parakeet and one is a superhero! Thank you Finley for the lovely masks!

We are really looking forward to welcoming you to Spring Common Academy full time in September!



Spring Common Academy Maths Learning Walk

SCA Maths Learning Walk Feedback – Tuesday 21st May 2024

Following an initial learning walk in December 2023, I delivered training to teachers on the importance of using practical resources to help our pupils develop their understanding of key number concepts. The expectation following the training was that teachers incorporate more practical ‘hands on’ opportunities into their number lessons. This learning walk was an opportunity to assess the impact of this training:

Learning Walk Foci:

- To review how practical resources are being used to support pupil learning / understanding of number concepts
- To assess how classroom learning environment supports learning in

The learning walk included a range of classes across the whole school.

In Early Years there was some great evidence of practical resources being used to support number songs. In one class the song Ten Green Bottles was being sung with the pupils and physical plastic bottles were used to emphasise the concept of one bottle falling off the wall (being taken away from the total) each time.

In a Key Stage 2 class it was great to see evidence of the recent practical maths training being put into action. The teacher explained that she had decided to, “work on one number per week,” with her pupils in order to help them secure their understanding of different numbers and what numbers mean. She went on to explain that in the current week her class were learning the meaning of the number four. There was evidence of multilink cubes, Numicon and other practical resources being used to help these pupils develop their understanding of the number four.

In one of the Upper Key Stage 2 classes there was evidence of some fantastic practical teaching focusing on the concept of comparing lengths. The TA who was leading this lesson asked a colleague to lie down on the floor. She then used some shaving foam to draw a line to emphasize how long her colleague was from head to toe. The pupils were then asked to lie down next to the line of foam to compare their length to that of the adult. There was evidence of some great open questioning being used in this lesson too to test pupils’ prior knowledge and understanding (Well done Ali F and team!). I observed pupils’ in both lower and upper school autism classes undertaking their Maths Structured TEACCH tasks. It was super to see how the pupils were using a range of practical resources to help them grasp number concepts.

In Key Stage 4 there was some great evidence of semi-formal learners being taught number concepts with a range of different resources. One pupil was being taught how to differentiate tens and ones. The TA working with this pupil emphasised the colours of the different multilink cubes to make a total of thirteen. The pupil understood that the orange cubes indicated ‘ten’ and that the three blue cubes indicated ‘three’. This helped the pupil see the visual connection between the ten and the three ones which made thirteen in total. There was great use of questioning by the TA in this instance to draw out the pupil’s understanding (Well done Rachael S!). Numicon was also used with this pupil as another practical / visual way of helping him to understand the connections between numbers. In another Key

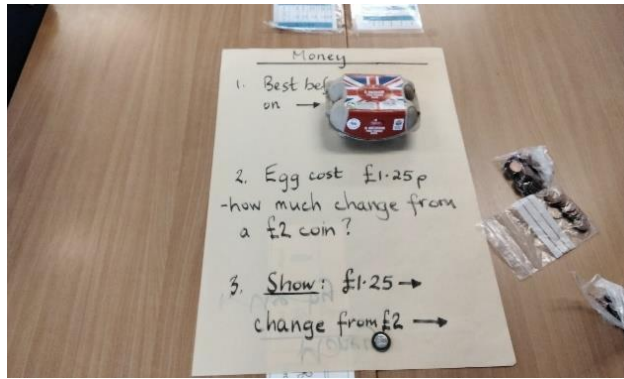
Stage 4 class the pupils were learning about the cost of supermarket items and how to give change. Real life packaging was used, as were life-sized coins. The mathematical problems that the pupils were working on were also set out clearly on a large sheet of paper which made it easy for them to understand and read. In a Post 16 class pupils were learning how to use calculators in order to prepare them for their ASDAN / AQA assessment. This was great to see.

Across the school there was some evidence of classroom displays being used to support pupils' learning. As these examples demonstrate, it is important that mathematical classroom displays are meaningful to our pupils. Such displays should be used to support pupils' understanding of taught concepts. Successes:

- Some evidence of practical resources being used to develop pupil understanding of mathematical number concepts.
- Evidence of open questioning being used to test / develop pupils' understanding.
- Evidence of teachers focusing on specific numbers more deeply in order to help secure pupils' understanding. Some evidence of the classroom learning environment being used to support pupils' learning.
- Some FANTASTIC practice by our Teaching Assistants. Well done! Areas for Development (Action Steps)
- We need to be more consistent across the school with the use of practical resources to help pupils understand number concepts.
- We need to be more consistent across the school with using visual prompts / symbols to help pupils' understanding of number concepts.
- We need to stop using worksheets with our pupils for counting tasks. This practice is still evident and it is crucial that pupils are able to count practically if they are to fully grasp number concepts.
- We should always have in mind the reason we are teaching number concepts to our pupils. Lessons should be as functional as possible for our pupils.

Thanks for your cooperation! Dave Horne, Maths Coordinator







A closer look at what the classes have been up to.....



Early Years

What busy little bees Early Years have been!

We have had lots of fun learning all about animals. We have been looking for different animals and their habitats, playing in the farm yard tuff trays with the pigs in the mud and the fish in the sea. We have even been playing in our vets home corner checking the animals heartbeats with a stethoscope and bandaging them up. We also went on a bug hunt during forest school and some of us were even brave enough to have a turn holding them! It's been so much fun!

Enjoy your half term break - *Shirelle*



1EB

This half term we have been reading 'The Great Kapok Tree' as part of the "Wonderful World - Animals" topic. This has given lots of opportunities to: explore different animal sounds and write sentences about the story in literacy; create animals in art and science; match, sort, and count animals in Maths, and to enjoy lots of animal themed Attention Autism activities too!

We have also been really working on developing our social skills together and enjoying more opportunities to play outside.

Happy half term everyone, looking forward to the last half term of the year! - *Ellie*



Lower PMLD

The lower school base enjoyed the topic about 'Amazing Animals'. They walked through the jungle and used all their senses to explore the magnificent creatures. They produced beautiful art crafts using finger, hand and foot prints. In Sensology they discovered sounds, tastes, and smells from the jungle. The children worked really hard with their physio programmes on a daily basis making huge progress! They grasped the opportunity of a few sunny days and they visited the town for shopping and social time in the community.

Enjoy your half term break - Pepy & Michelle



Upper PMLD

This half term, the upper school base got to ride on the ladybird boat from Huntingdon down to Hartford Mill. It was the first time the boat had been able to take any passengers out because of all the rain. We were really lucky because the sun came out and we could sit at the front of the boat and watch the scenery. Lots of people were walking along the pathways and they waved at us. We also saw some ducks, cormorants and geese. The class topic this half term is wild weather, but luckily our weather was the opposite.

In art they have been using different mediums to experience weather, making rain with bubble wrap and clouds with cotton wool and paint. They have also been exploring the story 'Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs' using baked beans, tomato ketchup and smelly cheese.

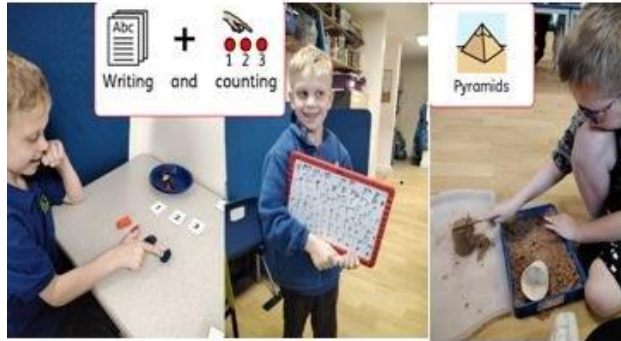
Enjoy your half term break - Pepy & Michelle



1DG

This half term 1DG have really enjoyed the story of 'Mr Gumpy's Outing'. They have explored the story with their senses, signing and role play. We have created a scene from the story through collaborative art as well as some of the characters. We explored how boats float and may sink! We looked for flowers in the fields, planting our own and building and labelling the parts of a plant.

Have a lovely half term - Danielle



This term we have linked our Phonics and
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Have a nice half term break - *Agus*



2CW

Class 2CW have had a brilliant term learning all about Ancient Egypt! We have learnt how mummies were made, about tombs and pyramids, and followed lots of stories about different Gods and Goddesses from Egyptian Mythology!

We've all done some brilliant work, but in particular our Art sessions have been awesome!

Happy half term - **Chris**



2IJ

This term our topic is Ancient Egypt. We have had lots of fun dressing up as Pharaohs and Mummies, and learning about the weather and animals in the desert. We have also spent time developing our fine

motor and creative skills by making Pharaohs' necklaces, ribbon mummies, paint washed sunsets and clay scarab beetles. Aren't our creations wonderful!

We hope you have a fab half term - *Isobelle*



2TS

What a wonderful start to the Summer Term and what a pleasure it has been to get to know the pupils in 2TS.

This half term we have been exploring different sounds made by instruments and the environment. We have learnt about animals through our sensory story and topic work, and have been exploring different textures and temperatures, how we react to them and how we communicate this. We have also been developing our pre-writing and fine motor skills and learning about numbers, sizes and 2D shapes through songs and sensory exploration. This photograph shows us exploring frozen peas and how the temperature and texture changes as they defrost.

I wish you all a lovely half term break - *Tabitha*



2CR

We had another successful visit out in the community when we went to Johnsons' zoo to reinforce notions taught in our Literacy topic of Egypt.

We hope you have a nice half term break - *Claudia*



2SG

This half term 2SG went on a school trip to mini monsters soft play in Buckden! We had a fantastic time and the children all enjoyed the slides and ball pool especially. This trip gave us the opportunity to explore the community, practice social skills and personal safety!

In school we have been learning about road safety. We have taken part in role play in the classroom, have been practicing crossing the road out the front of the school and are hoping to walk to the local park in the near future!

have a fab half term - *Sinead*



2SW

This term we are working on exploring Egypt. We have travelled miles to the Nile through the tombs and the sandy dunes, we have seen camels and scarab beetles and tasted some yummy honey. We have also looked at Egyptian gods and loved building a sarcophagus for Tutankhamun.

We will next be looking at Egyptian living including popular food and drink choices and then of course how Egyptian mummies were made. We have had lots of fun and creativity on this magical learning adventure.

I wish you all a happy half term - *Sammie*



3SBx

This term our topic has been Gnomeo and Juliet which all the students have enjoyed. As the story is based on Romeo and Juliet we have been exploring Italy. We have investigated where in the world Italy is, Italy's capital city, what language they speak and the food that they eat. In our Life skills lessons we have made pizza and a pasta bake. We used our weighing, chopping, spreading and time skills. All the students have engaged well with this topic and particularly enjoyed making the Italian foods.

Have a lovely half term - *Sarah*



3MuL

We have been following the topic of 'Gnomeo & Juliet'. As part of this learning, we have been planning and preparing space in the school allotment area in order to plant the tomatoes and tomatoes that we have been growing. We will possibly have chillis too if they ever start!

Have an enjoyable half term - *Munfred*



3DH

This half term our topic has been 'Cherish'. We have been learning the story of Gnomeo & Juliet and the majority of our learning has been based on this text. In life skills, we have been out in the school garden honing our gardening skills! Gnomeo & Juliet is based on the story of Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet. The main difference is that the key characters in the story are garden gnomes!.

Enjoy the break - *Dave*



3DW

This term we have been learning about "Gnomeo and Juliet", which has linked into Our World topic about Italy. Pupils have learned some facts about Italy, found it on a map and even experienced their own Italian café in school, where some of the older pupils in the school became their waiters! The pupils enjoyed the experience and used their communication skills to choose items from the menus they had made in previous lessons. Well done Class 3DW – ben fatto!

Enjoy your half term break - *Deb*



3MM

3MM has really enjoyed our new topic 'Cinderella' sensory story exploring the story props transporting ourselves into the story. We have also expanded our topic by completing various activities across the curriculum such as cooking Cinderella cupcakes and 'clock' biscuits for our Life skills cooking activities. In PSHE we have focused on kind and unkind behaviour reflecting on character traits from the story Cinderella. We have also sequenced the story and have completed various creative crafts which we posted on our display.

Have a great half term - *Mihaela*



4KH

We have been reading the story 'Alien's Love Underpants'. We have been using this story to support with our comprehension using Blanks Level questions and our sentence building skills with colourful semantics and writing full sentences with adjectives. We have also been working hard on our Accreditation work, particularly in science looking at changing states of materials through heating and cooling.'





4VC

This half term we have been hard at work completing a project with the Norris Museum. This joint project is promoting the importance of pollination through friendship and team work in the community! We designed and planted flower beds outside the museum with some wooden painted decorations that we made. On our last visit, the Mayor of St Ives joined us too. Our work has been entered into a competition 'St. Ives in Bloom' and 'Anglia in Bloom' so good luck 4VC!! The museum have enjoyed working with us and congratulated our students for their hard work and enthusiasm every visit. Well done 4VC!! Once again a pleasure to take out into the community.

Here is a quote from the museum director Claire "The Norris Museum Team are delighted and feel very privileged to have worked with 4VC and St Ives in Bloom on an important project that has highlighted the importance of pollination in a flower-bed planting project, on the theme of friendship, which the whole community will be able to enjoy. The project has grown and formed new relationships which we hope to build upon in the future.

Have a great half term - *Veena & 4VC team*



P16RG

This half term we have been visiting community facilities: practising road safety skills when walking into town; using shopping lists to help us remember what we need to buy; using symbols to help us recognise the items we need to find in the shops; scanning shopping at the tills; choosing snacks and using our money skills.

Have a lovely half term - *Rae*



P16LC

As a part of our ASDAN Unit Award, P16LC have been to a shop, bought seeds, compost and other required equipment and then planted a variety of seeds. We have taken turns to care for our plants since before Easter. Some of our plants are doing so well that they are now ready to sell. We have arranged a Pop Up Plant Sale on Thursday's in the school shop, to raise funds for Post 16. Carol and I have been very impressed with the students' enthusiasm to care for our plants. Here is a photo of Alisha taking her turn to care for our plants seriously. Well done P16LC!

Have an enjoyable week off - Linda



P16TD

The class have enjoyed the opportunity this half term to engage with The Fabb Herd Farm, Warboys, on a bi-weekly basis. The farm has enabled the students opportunities to develop their work related learning skills such team work, following processes and completing a designated lists of jobs.

I hope you all enjoy your half term break - *Tom*

We wish you all a lovely half term break! See you on Monday 3rd June!