Sires Hill Primary Academy

NEWSLETTER

1ST SEPTEMBER 2026

A very warm welcome back to Sires Hill Primary Academy , especially for those children and families who are joining us for the first time.

This newsletter will be longer than most as it aims to provide you with key information for the year. Do also check our website regularly.

The school newsletter is emailed out once a fortnight, usually on a Monday. It includes important information and an updated diary for the year.

The staff team have worked hard over the summer to prepare for another year of enriching learning and exciting trips and visits. They are a phenomenal team and everything they do has your child at the heart of it.

How to help your child to be successful and enjoy school

We want every child to enjoy school and will work with you to try to achieve that. There are simple things that you can do to support this and give your child every chance of success.

- Sensible bed time free of devices.
- Ensure your child attends school every day unless they are too ill to attend. Avoid routine appointments with dentists etc during the school day.
- Ensure your child is brought to school **on time every day and they are picked up on time.**
- Ensure that they eat breakfast before coming to school
- Ensure your child attends school in the correct uniform every day with everything they need - water bottle, reading books
- Keep toys, jewellery and other things that are special to the child at home.
- Read to your child, with your child and talk about the books building up vocabulary
- Talk to the staff in your class team if you have concerns as soon as they arise so that they can be dealt with as soon as possible
- Check texts, apps, and access to the internet and limit this where it is not suitable.

The next two weeks	
1st September	INSET day school closed to children
2nd September	INSET day school closed to children
3rd September	Years 1-3 start at 8:40am Reception EITHER 9-11:30 or 1pm -3:30pm your slots will be already allocated. NO NURSERY /Pre-school SESSIONS
4th September	Years 1-3 start at 8:40am Reception EITHER 9-11:30 or 1pm -3:30pm you slots will be already allocated NO NURSERY SESSIONS
7th September	Reception - Yr 3 in full time 8:40 am - 3:25pm NO NURSERY SESSIONS
8th September	Bright Sparks Assembly
9th September	Pre-School and Nursery sessions start at 9:30am
10th September	
11th September	

Please note that following recent government guidance smart watches are not to be worn by children. Children will be asked to remove them if worn, and they will be handed to you on pick up.



Your School Team	
School Office Please speak to our friendly office team if you need to see a member of staff, have an issue with Arbor, or to check any queries or questions.	Stephen Foggett (Office and Premises Manager) Jenny Henson (Office Assistant)
Executive Principal I am very proud to be the Executive Principal. I have led the school since it opened in 2023 and I also lead Didcot Primary Academy and spend time at both schools over the week	Alison Ashcroft
Senior Leader and SENCo A very experienced leader, Lianne is also responsible for leading our approach and provision for Special Educational Needs	Lianne Vickers
Assistant Principal The Assistant Principals work alongside me to lead the school.	Emmy Taylor
Caretaker Our caretaker works hard to ensure our school is safe and ready for learning.	Barry Pitchers

Early Years **Early Years Leader: Shelley Bennett**	
Nursery and Pre-School Team **Owlet Class:** Gladys Mante, Lucy Roberts **Duckling Class:** Savannah Hopkins-Simon, Mei Fung Tang, Nicola Allinson	**Reception Team** **Dragonfly class:** Shelley Bennett, Lucia Duran
Key Stage 1	
Year 1 **Hedgehog Class:** Stephanie Thompson Lush, Marie Greselle, Jinlan Rae	**Year 2** Dolphin Class: Charlotte Truscott, Pam Dean

Key Stage 2			
Year 3 **Chameleon Class**: Emmy Taylor	**Year 4** Will open in September 2027	**Year 5** Will open in September 2028	**Year 6** Will open in September 2029

Safeguarding at Sires Hill Primary Academy

Safeguarding is everyone's business. The staff team at Sires Hill Primary Academy are all trained in Safeguarding and have to be curious. All concerns are noted on our system and the majority of these will be discussed with parents and carers before contacting social services. The only time when there will not have been an initial discussion is when it is felt by professionals that a child could be put in danger.

If a member of staff has a concern about your child they have to report it on our safeguarding system. The Designated Safeguarding Leaders: Miss Taylor, Mrs Vickers, Mrs Ashcroft and Mrs Bennett will all be able to view this concern -but no other member of staff. They will then make a decision about what happens next: to monitor, to discuss with yourself or your child, or to seek further support. If further information is needed you will then be contacted by a member of the team. You may be asked to for information to complete a Strength and Needs form as this is usually requested by social services. The main aim of any of this is to help your child and to support your family. If a referral to social services is made they will then carry out an assessment to determine what happens next. This could be nothing and the case could close, you may be offered family help or, for more serious cases, it could progress to a Initial Child Protection Conference where professionals will decide if a child should be placed on a Child protection Plan. The school will continue to work with you to support your child throughout the process.

Please help us to help you. If your child has been upset about something that has happened at home or has sustained an injury at home, please let your child's teacher know (or email the office) as soon as possible.

UNIFORM

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILD WEARS THE SCHOOL UNIFORM EVERY DAY. ONLY 2 LOGO ITEMS ARE EXPECTED

RECEPTION - YEAR 4

- White polo shirt (with or without logo)
- Purple sweatshirt with logo
- Dark grey shorts, trousers (not leggings), pinafore, skirt
- Grey, white or purple socks/tights
- Black school shoes or plain black trainers

YEAR 5 and 6

- Same as above with the option of wearing white shirt (tucked in) with school tie.

PE Uniform

You will be told which days are PE days and this is when the PE uniform will be worn. Children do not get changed at school and must come to school in their PE kits on these days.

- House colour top with logo
- Plain black hoodie, school sweatshirt or Omnia hoodie
- Black shorts, tracksuit bottoms or leggings
- trainers (any colour)

Long hair (past shoulder length) must be fully tied back every day. Small purple/black accessories may be worn. No animal headbands. No jewellery (exception of small studs but not on PE days). No smart watches to be worn

BIRTHDAYS

When it is your child's birthday on a school day, this will be celebrated in school with class singing to them. Due to the number of serious allergies in school please **do not bring sweets** or other treats in to share with the class. Please note that having a day off for a birthday is not permitted!



PARKING

- Please be considerate if you have to drive to school to drop your child off and park in a safe place without blocking the driveways of residents or the staff car park.
- **DO NOT USE THE STAFF CARPARK**

CONCERNS AND QUERIES

If you need a longer discussion with your child's teacher, please do speak to the office to make an appointment so that you can be allocated sufficient time. This will be made at a mutually agreeable time and could be a phone call if that is preferable.

BEFORE SCHOOL....

- The school gates open at 8:40am. The gate by the zig zag path will be opened as well as the big gates by the school playground.
- The gates will be shut promptly at **8:50am. So please make sure that you have left the grounds by this time. There is sufficient time to do so.**
- Parents and carers remain responsible for their child until they are within the classroom.
- Your child's teacher will be at the classroom door to greet each child as they come in.
- This is not the best time to try to have a discussion with your child's teacher as they will be busy settling children in the classroom and getting ready to teach.
- If you have an urgent message to give to the class team, please speak to the school office.
- Please do not allow your child (or younger children) to use the play equipment or any other equipment that has been set up ready for the day ahead.
- If your child is attending the extended hours, you will need to buzz the main gate intercom. Please note that extended hours opens at 8:15am.

PRE-SCHOOL AND NURSERY

- Pre-school and nursery open at 9:30am. Please enter through the main gate with the intercom, it will be unlocked at this time.
- If you would like to extend the hours for morning or 30 hour children, this must be booked and paid for in advance. If you have booked, you can enter the school as usual at 8:40am.

AFTER SCHOOL....

- The school gates will open at 3:25pm for you to go and pick your child up.
- Children will only be dismissed to a known adult. If a different person is picking up your child (play date etc) please contact the office to let them know. They will then issue you with a password to give to the adult. The password changes daily. Children will not be handed over to a different adult without the password.
- School play equipment is not to be used after school.
- The gates will shut promptly at 3:35pm
- If you need to speak to your child's teacher quickly, please wait until all children have been dismissed from the class so that staff can continue to dismiss the other children.
- Please be on time to pick up your child.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

There is a wrap around service run by 'TA Sports Stars'' that operates daily at school for those children in reception and above. This operates until 6pm

There are a few other clubs that happen before or after school. These are usually run by external providers and have a charge (with the exception of choir). These other clubs are NOT childcare facilities and will be cancelled if staff are not available.

We run clubs within the school day on a Friday afternoon so that 100% of our school population can benefit from pursuing an interest. Children are expected to commit to their selected club for a half term.

EXTENDED HOURS

School staff run our extended hours club which operates from 8:15am daily. Please note breakfast is not served at this club. This service needs to be paid for in advance and booked with the school office team.

Extended hours for pre-school and Nursery

If you would like your morning or 30 hour place to be extended to fit in with school times, you must book and pay for the extended hour session that starts from 8:40am. This is available on Arbor.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Please make sure that you have selected your child's lunch on the Fresh Start website in good time to avoid disappointment. We have a fantastic catering team but they need to know in advance so that sufficient ingredients are sourced!

KEEPING YOU INFORMED...

We aim to work with you, in partnership, to keep you informed about your child's progress and curriculum - both academic and pastoral. There are a number of ways that we do this:

1. **Curriculum Information** - you will receive information, each full term, about your child's curriculum for that term. This is a summary of the content that will be taught to your child so that you can have informed discussions about this at home. This leaflet will also be available on the school website.
2. **Meetings with the class teacher** - we call these 'Learning Reviews' and they are held twice a year - in October and again in February. These ten minutes appointments are an opportunity to hear and talk about how your child is doing. These will be held in person or via the telephone. You will also be able to view their books.
3. **Progress Reports:** Parents of children in Year 1 onwards will receive a data snapshot report in December and March with your child's latest assessment against areas of the curriculum. In July you will receive a more detailed annual report. These will be emailed to you at the end of term.
4. **Meetings/Workshops:** We will be running a series of meetings/workshops during the year which will usually start at 9am. The PowerPoints will be available to those that are unable to make it during the school working day.
5. **Newsletters -** This newsletter is sent out at least once a fortnight - usually on a Monday. There will be information about things that have happened/will be happening in school as well as an updated diary.
6. **Website -** Our website holds a huge amount of information which is updated. You can find information about your child's curriculum and year group (including timetable) on the Curriculum tab of our school website: Curriculum Information by Year group
7. **Emails -** Our school office team endeavour to keep you informed and reminded through emails. They might not be able to remind you about every single event - so make sure you put the dates in the diary
8. **Responding to your queries:** If you send an email into school this will be dealt with as soon as feasibly possible. If you have not had a response within 48 hours, please do contact the office again to ensure that we have received it.
9. **Facebook:** We have an official school Facebook account where we post various information and celebrations - do follow us to keep up to date.

VOLUNTEERING FOR TRIPS

We do often ask for volunteers to attend trips. You will be allocated a group (which will most likely not include your child) and will be briefed on what to expect. This is not an opportunity for a day out with your child, but we do really appreciate your time to support the school.

WE ARE CASHFREE

All payments for school need to be paid by BACS or card payments. We have a device in the school office for these transactions.

PAYMENTS FOR TRIPS AND EVENTS

As per our 'Charging Policy' curriculum trips and events (with some exclusions) do not carry a payment but in order for the trip to go ahead we will ask for a 'parental contribution'. This is purely the cost of the trip divided by the number of children as the school does not make any profit on any trip. The bulk of the cost is usually transport as the coach costs are enormous. The office staff work hard to keep these as low as possible. We would never leave a child behind because they have not paid, however, should insufficient funds be collected, the whole trip could be cancelled as there is not sufficient money within the school budget to fund this.

ATTENDANCE

In line with the DfE Statutory Guidance (in force from 19th August 2024) we offer a supportive, stepped, attendance approach. We will offer a welcoming ethos with high expectations for all. We will assess data to identify absence trends & use preventative discussions/meetings with families to listen, understand & support to remove barriers. Where needed, we will formalise support to nurture improvement with Attendance Contracts and as a last resort we will consider intensifying support &/or enforce legal sanctions.

STEP 1 -Identify, Assess & Prevent

Our daily actions & processes aim to promote relationship building with children & families to prevent absence. This involves monitoring data trends & absence patterns to inform our conversations with you (& your child where age allows). The trigger for conversations is where absence is at risk of reaching the new National Threshold ***(10 sessions (10 half days/5 days) within a 10 week rolling period)***. Other daily actions involve promoting attendance positively, using praise & incentives, swift absence follow up, email &/or letter communication to raise your awareness of emerging concerns, processing requested or unrequested 'Term Time Exceptional Absence' & doing Home Visits to meet our safeguarding duties as required.

STEP 2 - Early Absence Support

We move to this step if the National Threshold for absence is met (authorised or unauthorised) to prevent further absence occurring. Discussions & meetings will be offered to identify if early support or reasonable adjustments are needed. This will be done using discussions &/or meetings to create a supportive action plan. An Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be required for some support to be accessed along with a Team Around the Family (TAF) Meeting Process

STEP 3 - Formalised Support

Where absence continues & initial support needs to be increased an Attendance Contract (AC) will be offered to formalise support. This is a 3-6 month nurturing plan of improvement to prevent further escalation. Achievable & individual targets will be set & reviewed regularly. Medical &/or other information will be actively sought at this point if required to work collaboratively with you & other agencies. An AC can run alongside other meetings e.g., TAF meeting.

STEP 4 - Warnings - Concerns Remain

Where STEP 2 or STEP 3 support has been unsuccessful &/or declined, a 'Formal Warning' if AC has failed, or a 'Notice to Improve' Letter if no AC appropriate, will be issued to reinforce the need for immediate improvement. A Family Court Order such as an Education Supervision Order will also be considered as an alternative to prosecution.

STEP 5 - Legal Action - No Improvement

Legal action (Penalty Notice or Prosecution) MAY be requested from the Local Authority (LA) if Unauthorised Term Time Absence is taken, or if overall absence continues to occur & reaches or exceeds the National Threshold for absence, despite STEPS 1-4 being attempted. Statutory Guidance States a Referral to Children's Social Care for children with 'Severe Absence' (less than 50%) should be considered to obtain 'Intense Support'.

PENALTY NOTICES & LEGAL ACTION

1st Offence (after 19th August 2024) of Term Time Leave &/or Irregular Attendance (10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence or more) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days fine is reduced to £80 per parent, per child.
2nd Offence within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days, no reduction available.
3rd Offence within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) NO PENALTY NOTICE considered. The case will be presented to **Magistrates' Court** under s444(1) or (1a) of the Education Act. If found guilty, a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child can be issued. Convictions for s444(1a) offences will show on DBS record.

Autumn 1 2026-27

Dates and events are subject to changes. Correct at time of writing.
This calendar will be updated with every news letter

Date	Who	What
1st September 2026	Whole school	Inset Day - School Closed to children
2nd September	Whole school	Inset Day- School closed to children
3rd September	Reception	Reception children transition sessions - 8:40am till 11:10am or 1 -3:30pm as allocated.
3rd September	Years 1-3	Term starts at 8:40am
4th September	Reception	Reception children transition sessions - 8:40am till 11:10am or 1 -3:30pm as allocated.
8th September	Years 1-3	Bright Sparks Science Assembly
9th September	Nursery and pre-school	Term starts for Nursery and Pre-school children 9:30am start (8:40am extended hours can be purchased in Arbor) 15 hours am: 9:30am-12:30pm 15 hours pm: 12:30pm - 3:30pm 30 hours: 9:30am -3:30pm
7th October	Whole school	Individual Photographs taken (no family groups)
9th October	Whole school	Inset Day- school closed to children
16th October	Whole school	Wear red - Show Racism the Red Card day
19th October and 21st October	Whole school	Learning reviews: Make an appointment via Arbor to meet your child's teacher and find out how your child has settled into their new class.
22nd October	Reception	Flu Vaccination programme
26th October-30th October	Whole school	Half term holidays. School Closed.

Autumn 2 2026-27

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This calendar will be updated with every news letter

Date	Who	What
2nd November	Whole school	Autumn Term 2 Starts
16th November	Whole school	Wear odd socks for Anti-bullying day
7th December	Pre-School	Christmas Craft afternoon and sing along 2:15pm. Come and join your child to make some Christmas decorations.
9th December	Reception	Christmas Nativity Play 2:30pm Please note that children under 5 will not be admitted into the audience
11th December	Year 2	Christmas play 2:30pm Please note that children under 5 will not be admitted into the audience.
14th December	Year 1	Christmas Craft afternoon and sing along 2:15pm. Come and join your child to make some Christmas decorations.
17th December	Reception to Year 3	Christmas Concert 9:15am. Come and join us for a musical festive celebration - be prepared to join in!
17th December	Whole school	End of term at 12 noon. Gates will open at 11:50am.

Spring 1 2026-27

Dates and events are subject to changes. Correct at time of writing.
This calendar will be updated with every news letter

Date	Who	What
4th January 2027	Whole school	Term starts 8:40am (Reception to Year 3) 9:30am (Nursery and pre-school)
22nd January	Young Voices Choir	Opportunity to join a choir of 7000 children to sing at the O2 Arena. Open to Year 3 children only (10 places)
8th February and 10th February	whole school	Learning reviews. Make sure you make an appointment via Arbor to meet your child's teacher and find out how your child is progressing academically.
15th - 19th February	Whole school	Half term - school closed to children .

Spring 2 2026-27

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Date	Who	What
22nd February	Whole school	Term starts 8:40am (Reception to Year 3) 9:30am (Nursery and pre-school)
24th March	Nursery and pre - school	End of term for Nursery and pre-school (usual time)
25th March	Whole school	End of term at 12 noon (gates will open at 11:50am)

Summer 1 2026-27

Dates and events are subject to changes. Correct at time of writing.
This calendar will be updated with every news letter

Date	Who	What
12th April	Whole school	Term starts 8:40am (Reception to Year 3) 9:30am (Nursery and pre-school)
26th May	Whole school	Sports Day and family picnic- timings will be sent out nearer the time
28th May	Whole school	End of Summer 1
31st May - 4th June	Whole school	Half term

Summer 2 2026-27

Dates and events are subject to changes. Correct at time of writing.
This calendar will be updated with every news letter

Date	Who	What
7th June	Whole school	Term starts 8:40am (Reception to Year 3) 9:30am (Nursery and pre-school)
11th June	Whole school	Inset Day - school closed to children
19th July	nursery and pre-school	End of term (usual session times 12:30 or 3:30pm)
20th July	Whole school	End of term at 12 noon (gates will open at 11:50am)