

Valence News

There is lots to read in this edition, with updates from a wide range of classes showcasing the creativity, determination and achievements of our fantastic students. From sporting success to wellbeing activities, it's been another busy week.

Many of you will have been enjoying the excitement of the Winter Olympics, especially the team curling competition. After Team GB narrowly missed out on a medal in the mixed pairs event last week, the nation has been watching closely. At the time of writing, Team GB are yet to secure a medal — but perhaps that will change this weekend!

Here at school, our own athletes have been showing just as much determination in our Interhouse Boccia Competition. Students took part in a competitive round-robin of matches to find the winning house, demonstrating great focus and teamwork throughout. You can find the full results, photographs and match report later in this newsletter.

With Valentine's Day this weekend, our residential students have been taking part in "Love Yourself" activities, thinking about how to look after their own wellbeing. The week culminated in a baking competition filled with creativity. Well done to Bungalow 6, whose fantastic entry was voted the winner — commiserations to bungalow 3 who managed to eat their entry a day before judging!



As we come to the end of Term Three, we would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support of the school. We hope you enjoy the week ahead, whatever you may be doing.

Term Four will be short and very busy, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed on Monday 23rd February. Have a good half term

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House Boccia 2026

On Monday and Wednesday this week, the students finished off their target games unit of work by competing for their houses in the annual House Boccia competition! It was a fun and exciting morning where students were able to use the skills learned in PE lessons to showcase their talents against their peers. The secondary students played full Boccia games in round robin tournaments and in Primary, there was a mixture of Boccia and target-based challenges for the students to collect their points from! The competition was fierce, but the positive engagement and enjoyment was the real winner on the day.



The results are as follows.

Primary

CHARTWELL	HEAVER	SQUERRYES	QUEBEC
19	23	26	18

Secondary

CHARTWELL	HEAVER	SQUERRYES	QUEBEC
16	18	25	28

Overall

CHARTWELL	HEAVER	SQUERRYES	QUEBEC
35	41	51	46

Congratulations to Squerryes for winning the primary competition and the overall tournament! Also, a special mention to Quebec for winning the secondary competition. Well done to all the students and staff involved in what was a lovely couple of mornings. We will look forward to more house competitions next term with our striking and fielding games.

Rabbit Class



In Rabbit class this term, we have been enjoying a range of different activities linking to our topic Let's be heroes.

Our students have loved completing different sensory activities like playing with Jelly, shaving foam and ice.

Other students have loved the sensory story of people who help us as you can see from playing dress up as doctors, police and firefighters.

The students have also been enjoying their physical management going into their standers and walkers to help complete fine motor activities, and as always continue to love their PE lessons where they get to swim.

Rabbit students have been enjoying forest school, learning about different winter birds and going on nature treasure hunts.

Independence - Health and wellbeing

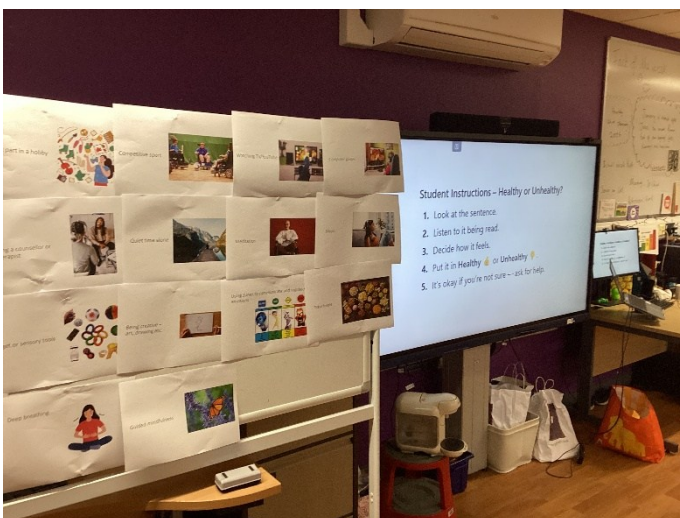
This term, students in Simmonds 3 & 4 have been studying health and wellbeing as part of their AQA Unit Award Scheme.

They have taken a holistic approach, focusing on themselves as whole individuals and exploring how the mind and body are connected in much of what we do.



Students explored accessible sport, using the Paralympics as an inspiring example of what can be achieved. They also reflected on their own hobbies and interests and considered how they might access these in the future. As part of this, they researched organisations in their local area and even sent enquiry emails about accessibility and inclusion.

Another week focused on mental health, during which students held frank and honest discussions with each other and with staff. They practised compassionate listening, explored what healthy relationships look like, and identified strategies that support their own mental wellbeing.



The unit also included a practical element: an accessible yoga session led by a qualified yoga instructor. This provided an opportunity to try something new that brought together both mind and body. Students approached the session with open minds and offered thoughtful, honest feedback on their experiences:



"It helped me to relax; I enjoyed the breathing."

"I found the movements difficult."

"It helped my body relax, but I felt tired!"

Demonstrating excellent respectfulness, students emailed the instructor afterwards to thank them and share their feedback. The term will conclude with students reviewing their EHCP targets and considering how they can take a more active role in working towards goals related to their health and wellbeing.

Classes in Simmonds Pathway have been working on graphs this Term.
Here is some of our work.

Graph work-Bar graphs

Esther

3 Use the clues to complete the block diagram.

- There are 3 cheetahs.
- The number of lions is double the number of cheetahs.
- There are 5 more tigers than cheetahs.
- There are half as many leopards as there are tigers.

10				
9				
8				
7				
6				
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				
0				
	leopard	cheetah	lion	tiger

2 Think of your own set of clues for a partner to draw a block diagram.

White Rose MTHS

Pictograms

4 There are some flowers in a garden.

- There are 4 sunflowers.
- There is 1 less daffodil than there are sunflowers.
- There are twice as many daisies as daffodils.
- There is the same number of tulips as daffodils.

a) Complete the pictogram.

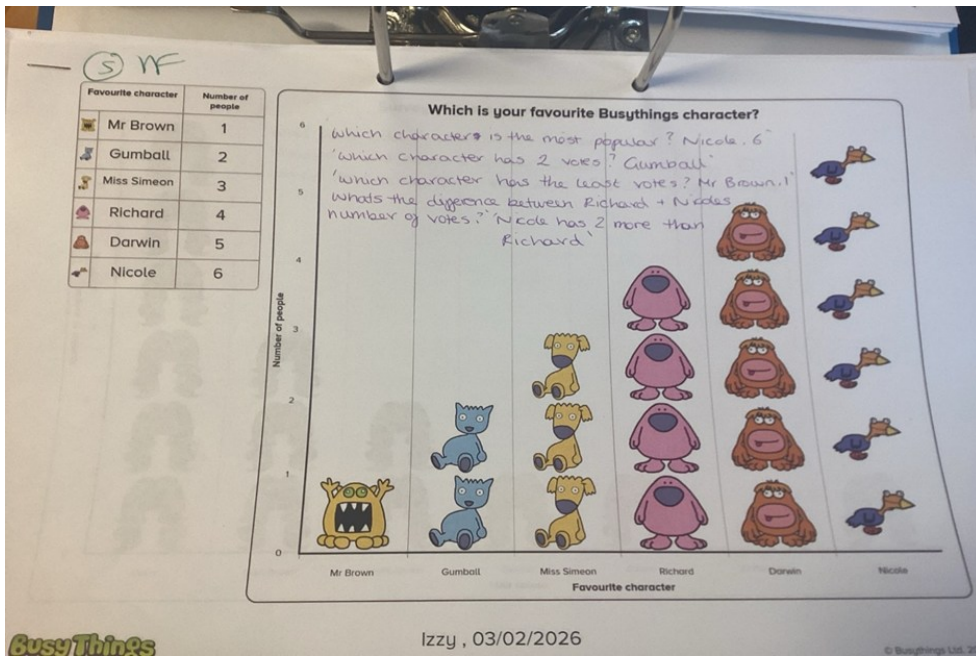
Key
 = 1 flower

Flower	Number of flowers
sunflower	
daffodil	
daisy	
tulip	

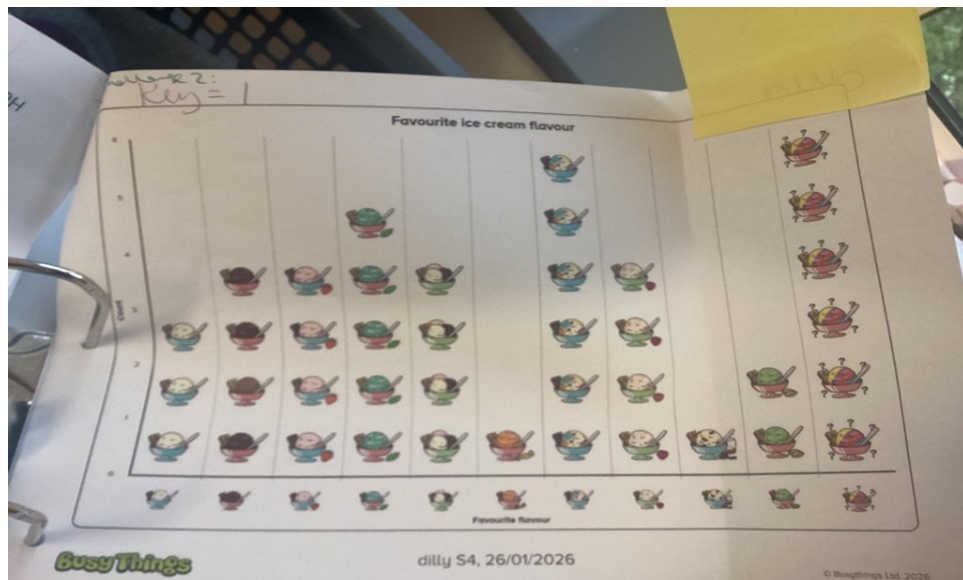
b) How many flowers are there in the garden in total?

16

White Rose MTHS



See some of our comments on our work too!



4 Here are some shapes.

a) Complete the tally chart to show how many of each shape there are.

Shape	Tally	Total
circle		5
rectangle		1
square		4
triangle		8

b) How did you do the tallying?
Compare with a partner.

5 Sam, Ron and Mo tally how many jumps they can do in a minute.

Name	Tally
Sam	
Ron	
Mo	

a)

Sam: My total is 11

Do you agree with Sam? "NO" ✓
 Explain your reasons. "Sam Tally Said" ✓
 "Put a line when you get to 5"

b) How can Ron improve his tally marks?
 Extension: - after PC + PM

6 Make a tally chart for a topic of your choice.
Compare charts with a partner.


Tally charts and totals

Pie Charts

stics - Ages 10-11

Favourite hobbies

Hobby	Friends
tennis	10
trampolining	5
tree swinging	4
other	1



Question 1 of 5
Brown Monkey is investigating his friends' favourite hobbies.

Here is a **table** of the results and a **pie chart**.

Which colour on the pie chart represents **other**?

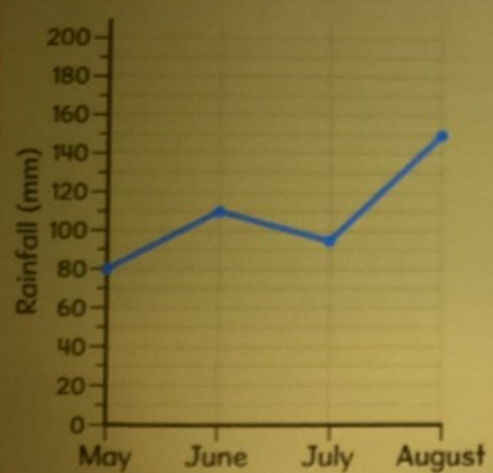
A red **B** yellow

C blue

Back **Next**

ges 10-11

Rainfall in Hawaii



Question 4 of 5
Between which two months was there the largest difference in rainfall?

A May and July

B June and July

C May and August

Back **Next**

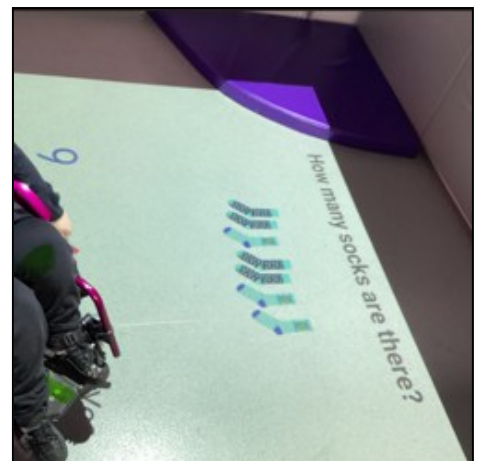
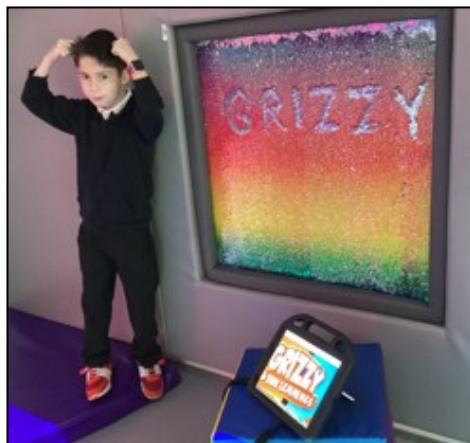
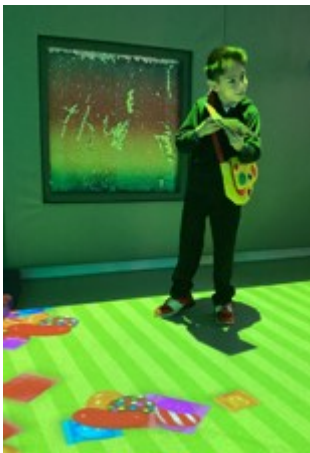
News from Simmonds 1

Simmonds 1 students have all been very busy and are working really hard. Here are a few of our recent highlights...

We really loved the boccia inter-house competitions.



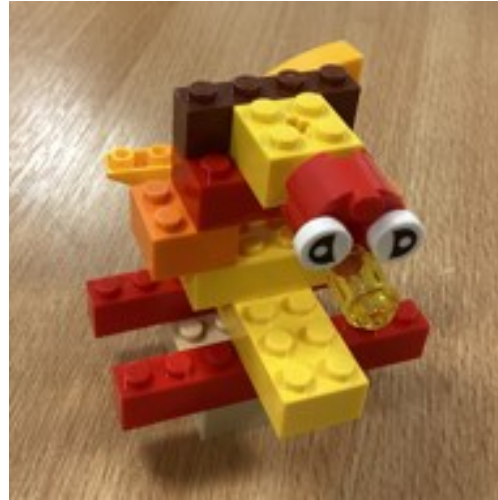
S1 continue to love the Sensory Room and we even recap some of our maths, phonics and reading skills in these sessions too!



In our topic, we've been thinking about how to respect our environment and care for our planet.



In computing, we've been learning about algorithms; we completed a Lego task, thinking about how we could make a step-by-step set of instructions designed to help someone else complete the task.



In our cooking lessons we've made naan breads and sweet potato hummus, practising our skills; we've also been learning how to keep safe in the kitchen.



S1 continue to love and really engage with their Makaton signing and we love watching signed stories. Here is the link, if you'd like to watch some at home too: <https://www.morethanwordscharity.com/videos>

Here is a link to Singing Hands UK YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSgfqkristwvJft3BNN-NYQ>

We are looking forward to planning another class trip soon, as we won the most merits recently, and we can't wait to start our Outdoor Learning lessons again, with Gail. We are also going to go to Sevenoaks School for weekly art sessions, which will be fantastic! So, look out for more exciting updates from S1 again soon!

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING SAFE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly woven into young people's digital lives. It can offer some educational benefits and day-to-day assistance; however, it also raises concerns about misinformation, privacy, fairness, and safety. This guide provides parents and educators with practical strategies to support young people to navigate AI tools responsibly, and to use them safely and with discernment.

1 DEMYSTIFY WHAT AI REALLY IS

Children encounter AI in most online places, including games, streaming platforms, and school tools. Explain that AI uses patterns from past data to make decisions, but it doesn't think or feel like humans. Use age-appropriate examples, like how recommendations on YouTube or Netflix work, to build understanding and prevent false beliefs about AI being all-knowing or alive.

2 TALK ABOUT RISKS OF MISINFORMATION

AI can create convincing false information, including deepfake videos, photos, and fake 'facts'. Encourage children to think critically about what they see and read. Teach them to double-check information using reliable sources, to look at images and videos carefully, and to ask an adult if something doesn't seem right.

3 DISCUSS DATA AND PRIVACY

Explain that AI systems learn by analysing lots of data, sometimes including personal information. Help young people to be mindful of what they share online and why protecting personal data matters. Model good habits like reading app permissions together or reviewing what's collected by voice assistants like Alexa or Siri.

4 ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF AI

Support children, when using AI tools, to explore ideas, make art, or build projects. This fosters confidence, imagination, and independent thinking. When children use AI creatively, rather than just passively consuming it, they are more likely to stay engaged and make thoughtful choices.

5 USE AGE-APPROPRIATE AI TOOLS

Not all AI platforms are suitable for children. Choose tools designed for education or creativity, with clear safety policies. Review terms of use and privacy settings, and help children use them in age-appropriate ways. For example, some chatbot tools mimic conversation but should only be used with guidance and boundaries in place.

6 USE AI TOGETHER

Exploring AI tools together can help adults understand how they work and spot potential issues. Try co-writing a story with an AI writing assistant or experimenting with an AI art tool. This encourages curiosity, helps you stay informed about the latest AI tools, and allows you to reinforce safe and respectful use while modelling critical thinking.

7 SET BOUNDARIES FOR AI USE

Establish when, where, and how AI tools can be used, just as you would with any digital technology. For example, you might agree not to use AI tools to complete school assignments without permission, or to avoid unsupervised use of voice assistants. Consistent boundaries help manage overuse and misuse.

8 WATCH FOR OVERRELIANCE

Some AI tools, like homework help apps, may be tempting shortcuts. Encourage children to use AI to support their thinking, not replace it. Celebrate effort and process over perfect answers. Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning and that relying too heavily on AI can limit real understanding.

9 TEACH DIGITAL ETHICS AND LITERACY

Help children explore how AI works, where it might be biased, and why ethical thinking matters. Building digital literacy alongside ethical awareness ensures children engage with AI critically, not just conveniently. Help young people to understand that not all people use AI for legitimate purposes; some use it for malicious reasons. Encourage questions about fairness, representation, and who benefits from certain tools; talk about algorithms, echo chambers, and the impact of automation on daily life.

10 STAY CURIOUS AND INVOLVED

AI is developing rapidly, and staying informed helps you support the young people in your care. Follow trusted sources for updates and keep the conversation going. If a child brings up a new AI trend or tool, take the opportunity to learn about it together. Showing interest builds trust and strengthens digital resilience.

Meet Our Expert

Home to the world's largest CPD library for educators, The National College has transformed the way education establishments go about developing their workforces and managing compliance. Our three memberships help all phases and types of setting raise standards, save time, reduce risk, and build a culture of improvement.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Senior Staff On-call Rota from 13th February 2026

Matt Strange **07894 483673**
Lisa Kavanagh **07912 124724**
Jo Chivers **07896 905095**

Date	Day	Time	DSL	DSL
13/02/2026	Friday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Closed for Half Term
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
23/02/2026	Monday	07:30 To midday	Matt Strange	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
24/02/2026	Tuesday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Jo Chivers
		Midday to 4pm	Jo Chivers	
25/02/2026	Wednesday	09:00 To midday	Jo Chivers	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
26/02/2026	Thursday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Matt Strange
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	
27/02/2026	Friday	09:00 To midday	Matt Strange	Closed
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	



Valentine's Day, is a festival of romance, love, and friendship. People express affection by exchanging cards, flowers, chocolates, and gifts with partners, family, and friends. It has roots in both ancient Roman traditions (Lupercalia) and Christian history, honoring Saint Valentine.