



Ropley Church of
England Primary
School
Spring 1 Newsletter



What another busy half term it has been! The school received its annual local authority inspection in January. Whilst this is not the same process as an Ofsted inspection, it was still rigorous and we wanted to share some of the comments made:

“The school holds high ambitions for every child to achieve well. This ambition is evident in the quality of teaching and in outcomes across the school. Leaders, teachers, and governors share this vision and clearly articulate their roles in achieving it.”

“Children with additional needs achieve significantly above similar groups locally and nationally.”

“Children demonstrate enthusiasm for learning and show strong subject knowledge across both art and history. In history, children make effective links between units of work, confidently identifying similarities and differences across periods studied. They articulate the key contributions of different civilisations with clarity and understanding. In art, they talk positively about their learning and explain the impact of studying key artists.”

“Children enjoy coming to school, appreciating the wide range of opportunities afforded to them. They feel safe and well cared for, using initiatives such as the worry box, to effectively alert staff to any concerns.”

We also wanted to share some lovely comments the school has received in the last few weeks:

“I love coming to volunteer at this school. The children (and staff!) are always so pleasant. I should imagine the children do not know how fortunate they are to attend such a wonderful school.”

“I wanted to pass on my congratulations to the school. It was a pleasure to come and visit: the learning in the classrooms, the behaviour on the playground and the general ethos was sheer joy.”

You may have seen the Hampshire article on recent league tables; Ropley CE Primary School has now been confirmed as the 14th highest performing school in Hampshire! As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the school’s vision is for every child to flourish both academically and personally. With so many exceptional independent schools across Hampshire, we strive to ensure our pupils get the same chances in life as in the private sector – I hope this newsletter demonstrates how we aim to do this.

I hope all our families have a wonderful break and we look forward to seeing you all again on Tuesday 24th February 2026.

Kind regards,

Mr Daniel Mills

Bumblebees (Year R)

Our youngest children have made fantastic strides in their learning this half term. The children have been continuing their learning on subitising as well as comparing numbers up to 5 in mathematics. Within Drawing Club (our way of teaching some elements of writing in Year R), the children have studied The Gingerbread Man, Goldilocks, The Hoys and Little Red Riding Hood.

Within their outdoor learning, the children have started planting seeds in the raised beds in their garden. The children have also become avid twitchers as they enjoy the thrill of bird watching. The children are enjoying the updated art area within the classroom as well as the new cosy reading section.



Honeybees (Year 1)



Honeybee children enjoyed creating biscuit structures as part of their Design & Technology unit. In History, the children studied Florence Nightingale and were then delighted to interview a modern nurse to identify similarities and differences. In computing lessons, the children started their coding units and enjoyed learning about animal survival in Science.

Carpenter Bees (Year 2)



Children in Year 2 have been making sculptures as part of their Art & Design unit. The children studied the sculptor Michelle Reader and made their designs based on this. In Geography, the children have been learning all about Kota Kinabalu and in music, the children performed their boomwhacker piece to Bumblebee Class.

Nectar Class (Year 3)



Nectar Class have been studying the Romans; the children have been reflecting on what makes an effective historian and used these disciplinary skills within their learning. In Art & Design, the children have been weaving and in Religious Education, learning all about Holi in Hinduism.

Honeycomb (Year 4)



Year 4 have been learning all about the Anglo-Saxons in History. In French, the children have been learning ways to describe people. The children have been learning the ukulele in music and learning all about plant reproduction in Science.

Pollinators (Year 5)



Year 5 children have been very busy this half term! The children have studied the artist Orla Kiely and have been producing prints in her style. In History, the children have been learning about the Victorians – the children even spent some time experiencing what life was like in a workhouse. The children have enjoyed tag rugby in Physical Education and playing the recorder in Music.

Bee Keepers (Year 6)

Year 6 have been studying the artist Paul Jackson and then attempted to recreate his style in their own sketches. In computing lessons, the children have been learning about Excel spreadsheets. The children have been studying Las Vegas and learning about how there is far more in Nevada than just casinos! Within Science lessons, the children have been studying Evolution and Inheritance.

Sporting Achievements

It's been another busy half term for sporting events! Well done to the Year 5 children who took part in the Physical Education Theory Challenge. Sixteen children represented the school at the Alton Swimming Gala in January – this was a huge event with twelve schools taking part – we were delighted to come 3rd. The Year 4 Dodgeball Team came 3rd narrowly missing out on just two points from 1st place! Well done to all of the cross-country runners who went to Perins: two of our pupils have made the county finals - we wish Elijah and Max the best of luck. Finally, well done to the children in Year 1 and 2 who took part in the East Hampshire Gymnastics Festival.



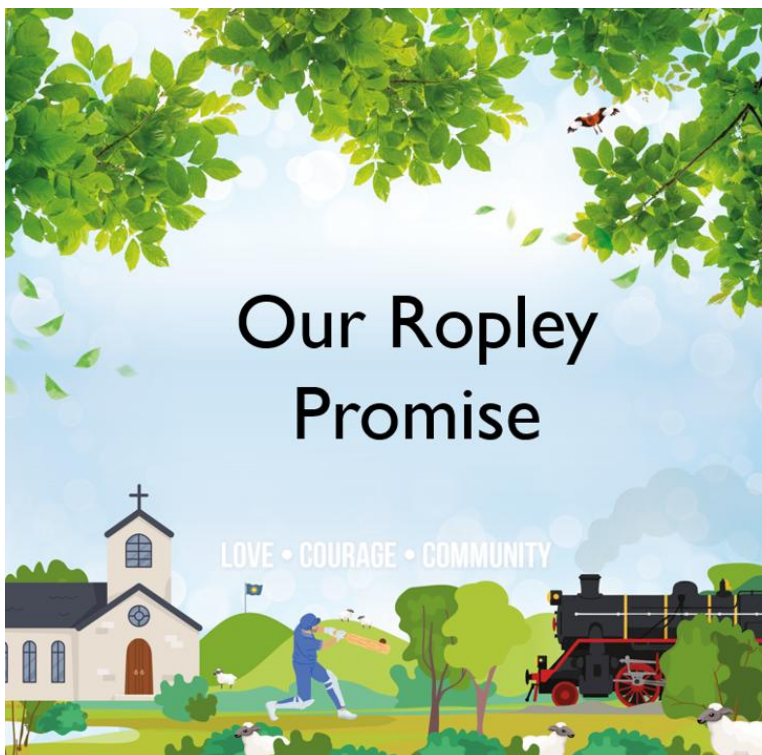
LAMDA Update

LAMDA Speech and Drama classes were launched at the start of the academic year and the pupils have truly impressed us with their dedication and enthusiasm. Each student has now selected their performance scenes and been working hard memorising lines, rehearsing movements, gestures and actions and focussing on their characterisation and vocal projection as they prepare for their first LAMDA exams. After half term, we will also begin work on the theory aspect of the LAMDA process, looking at the discussion topics the examiner will chat through with the students. The LAMDA exams are due to take place in Alresford in early June; we know every pupil will be well and truly ready to give it their all, and we are sure excellent results will follow.

We feel so lucky to be able to work with such talented children at Ropley C.E. Primary and we cannot wait to share further news once everyone has completed their first exam. We also run LAMDA classes at several local secondary schools so we feel privileged to see firsthand the positive effect the LAMDA process can have on pupils right the way through their school life. Indeed, some of our current pupils who have recently taken their Silver and Gold Medal exams started with us in Year 2 and now have achieved the highest of grades and UCAS points to help support their ongoing academic journeys. We are sure there will be many Ropley pupils to follow in their footsteps. For pupils in Years 2 to 6, there are a couple of places now available at our LAMDA after school club run on a Wednesday at 3.15pm, so please do email admin@dramabeasts.com for more information.

The Ropley Promise

Did you know we have something called 'The Ropley Promise'? Our promise encapsulates the rich range of personal, social and cultural opportunities which we believe every child has the right to experience. The seven-year journey that children embark on across the school provides an excellent foundation for later learning and life. Below are things we promise children will have had the opportunity to do at our school before they leave us.



- Experience a residential trip
- Have the opportunity to take part in a variety of water sports such as kayaking, canoeing and paddleboarding
- Run an enterprise project
- Visit the seaside
- Gain a cycling award
- Hatch and care for animals
- Dance, sing and perform
- Learn a musical instrument
- Take part in sporting events
- Travel on a train, boat/hovercraft and coach
- Visit a variety of places of worship
- Supported the local community

Reading at Ropley



Thank you to Miss Hathaway-Timms who entered a competition and won the school £500 worth of books! We would also like to thank an anonymous donor who has granted £3000 towards improving our reading texts across the school. This donation also includes our new reading intervention delivered across afternoons which has proven to be very popular!

As you know, promoting the importance of reading continues to be a big focus here at Ropley! For children in Years 3 to 6, we have our 'Rainforest Reading for Pleasure Scheme' – if you do not remember what this is, it is a selection of 20 books for each year group which are highly recommended. There will be a special treat at the end of the year for those children who have read them. For our younger children, we have invested £5000 in new phonics books so children have higher-quality phonetically decodable books to send home. Some children may also be talking to you about 'Rapid Read' – this is a specific reading intervention to support both fluency and comprehension – this is again, another investment of £1200. Please keep up the reading – it is the most important skill we can give children.

Breakfast Club

Numbers for the breakfast club on a Friday are currently very low – almost too low to make it a viable option. The school makes a considerable loss on Friday mornings so if you were looking for an ideal day to send the children in an hour early, please consider a Friday!

Half Term Challenges!

Due to popular request by parents, we have set up accounts for children in Years 1 and 2 to access Numbots and children in Years 3 to 5 to access TTRockstars. If you have not been given a login for your child, expect to get this during the first week back. Take a look over the break if your child has a login – Year 4 can challenge teachers to times table quizzes. Mr Mills, Mrs Noott (Maths Manager) and Miss Hathaway-Timms are ready to compete against the children throughout half term!

How you can support us

Free Meal Shortfall

Did you know, free school meals are not actually free for the school?! The school receives £2.61 for every child in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 which means the school has a shortfall of £1275.75 each year. When you factor in utility bills, staffing and our contract with CaterLink, the shortfall is closer to £4000 (£23 per child). If your child has a free school meal and you'd like to make a shortfall contribution, this would mean more money could be spent on supporting the children.

Curriculum Resources Contribution

Quite a few schools ask for termly contributions from parents to cover the costs of in-school activities. We have an ambitious and exciting curriculum for our children at Ropley. If every parent donated £30 per year, this would reduce our curriculum cost by 40%! If you would like to make a contribution, Scopay does allow for this.

EYFS Forest School Area Update

We are currently designing our next exciting development at our school! We are currently raising funds to be able to build an Early Years Forest School Garden.

This area will be dedicated to our Early Years and KS1 children to enable them to explore, enjoy and develop their curiosity, physical stamina, gross motor skills, creativity and communication skills, through a dedicated outdoor learning environment.

With funding that has already been committed to the project, we are looking forward to starting this build in the Spring Term so watch this space!



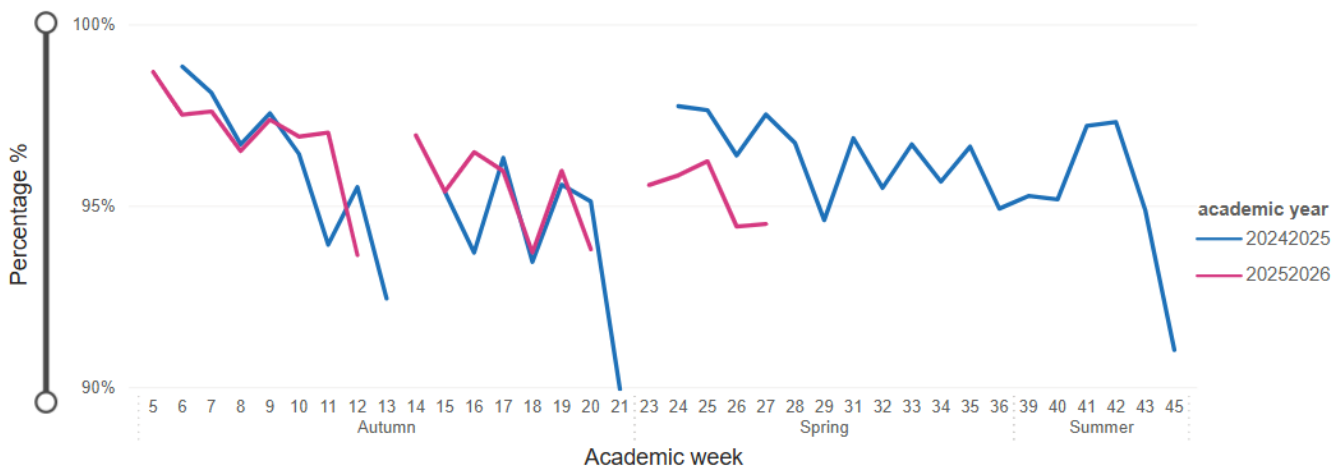
Funding raised so far: £55, 000. This means the school only needs £5000 more which we hope to achieve by further sponsorship from local organisations. If you know a company who may like to sponsor, please do let us know; we are very happy to install permanent plaques from sponsors in the garden.

Attendance

The Department for Education and Ofsted require all schools to monitor and report on absence figures. Our school's attendance this term is 95.9% which is a further dip since Christmas. The graph below, from Hampshire County Council, explains the impact of this on children's learning. Children who fall below 90% attendance are classed as at extreme risk of underachievement.



The below graph, provided by the Department for Education, shows our school attendance trend so far this year compared to last year. We are down compared to last year by some margin!



We understand that children do get unwell sometimes and have other reasons for absence, but we really encourage parents to bring children in, even if they are under the weather. The office team can help administer Calpol and will always give you a call if they are not well enough to stay in school. Many thanks for your support with this.



LOVE • COURAGE • COMMUNITY

2026: Celebrating 200 Years of the First Ropley School

February/March

Reading Fundraiser – look out for the letter after half term!

April

Easter Tombola and Cake Sale (25th March 2026)

June

Sports Day, Picnic Lunch, World Cup Fundraiser and Colour Run (18th June 2026)

July

RopFest 200 Year Celebration (10th July 2026)

October

Quiz Night (16th October 2026)

November

Christmas Event (TBC)

Keep these dates free to support the school!