



GREAT KINGSHILL

Church of England Combined School



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Great Kingshill CE Combined School

28th February 2025

Aspiring to be our best with kindness, respect and faith

Welcome to Spring 2!

I hope you had a lovely and relaxing half-term break. It has been lovely to welcome the children back into school this week, and great to see so many parents visiting the Science Fair and Open Classrooms on Tuesday.

As always, we have plenty going on. Firstly, I'm delighted to say that work on the MUGA and playground refurbishment is well underway - the children have taken great delight in seeing the work taking place!

There's lots more to look forward to over the coming weeks: World Book Day is next Thursday; Year 4 will be welcoming 'Spirit of the Wild'; Year 3 are heading out to Chiltern Open Air Museum; and Year 6 have their residential to Norfolk Lakes. We also have exciting PTA events, including the Quiz Night.

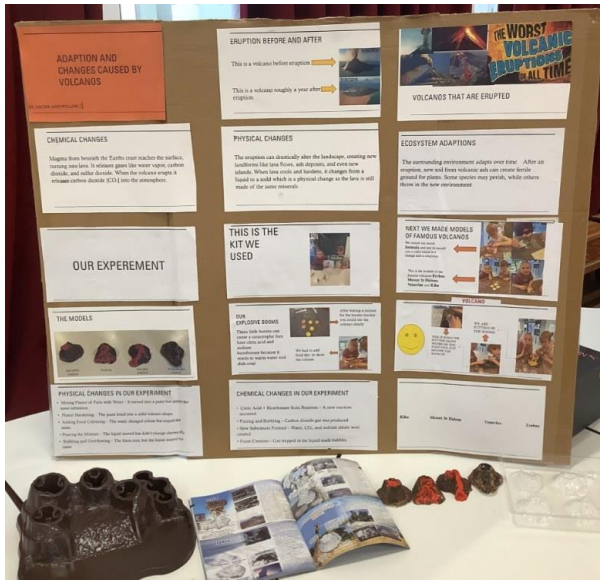
Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

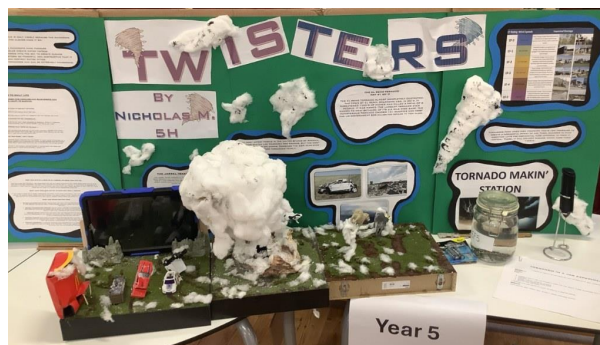
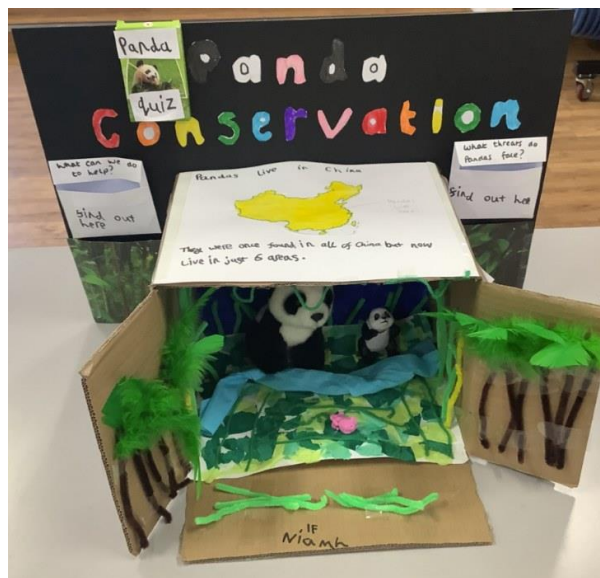
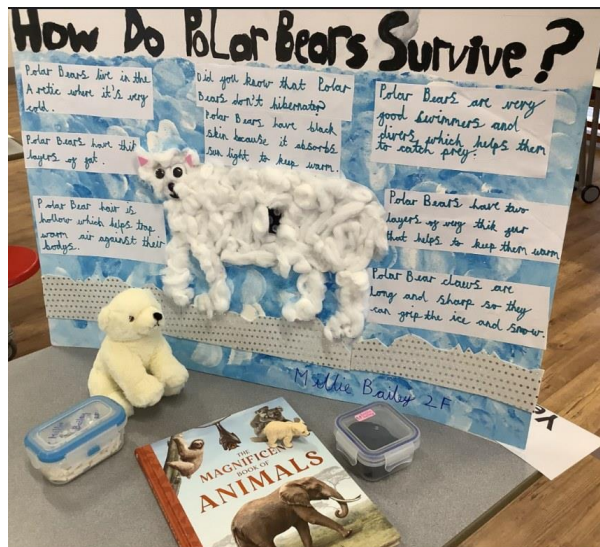
Mrs Best

GKCS Science Fair

The school hall was transformed on Tuesday for the GKCS Science Fair - and what an event it was! The care, attention to detail and amount of knowledge put into the entries was amazing, and it was fantastic to see so many children from all year groups taking part.







Thank you to all of the children who contributed an entry, and a massive thank you to Mrs Mahdavi for all of her hard work in organising and running the Science Fair. We're already excited to see what the children will produce next year!

Letter to parents - feedback from Parents' Evening

Thank you to the parents who completed the survey at the end of parents' evening last half term. In total, we received 113 responses.

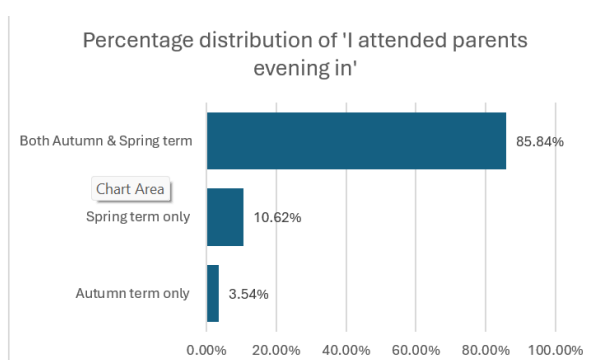
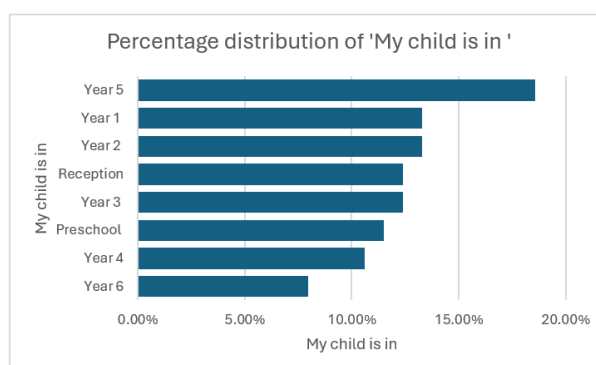
Below is a summary of the information shared by parents. Congratulations to Year 5 parents for having the highest number of returns!

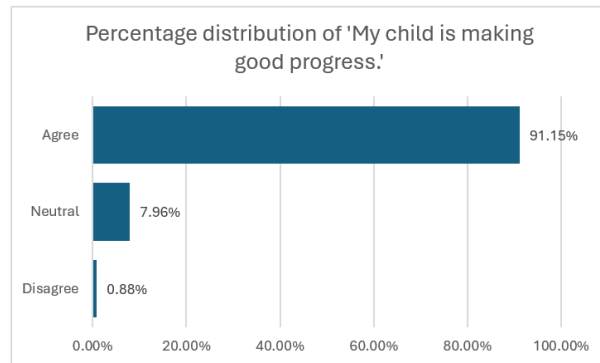
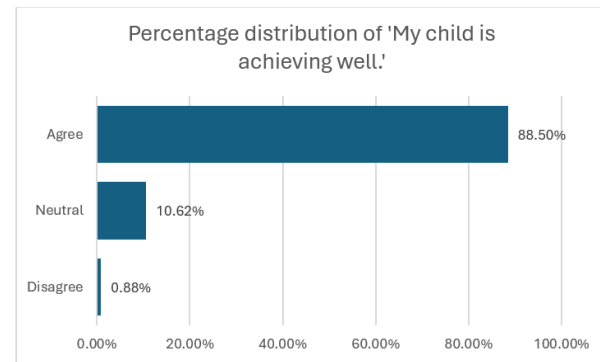
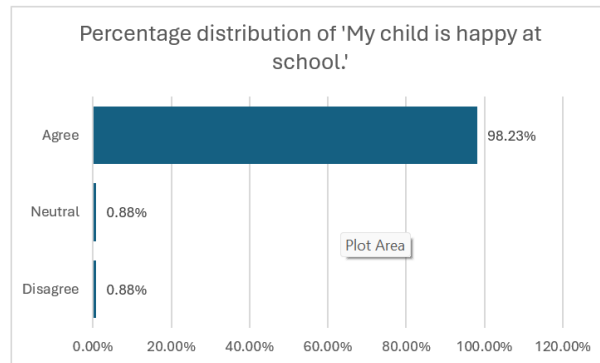
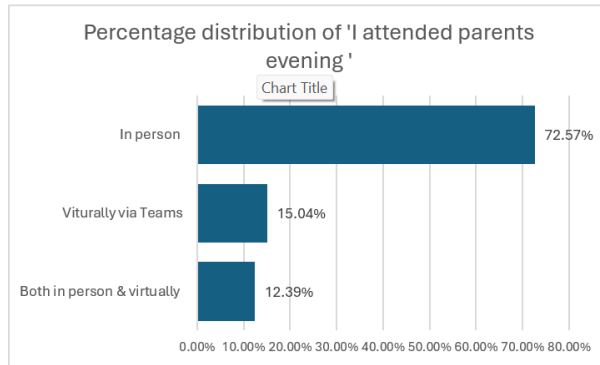
The SEN section of the survey will be shared in a separate document at a later date. Overwhelmingly, the feedback from parents is extremely positive, and the staff and I are delighted with the responses received and that most importantly, parents feel that their child is happy at school and achieving well.

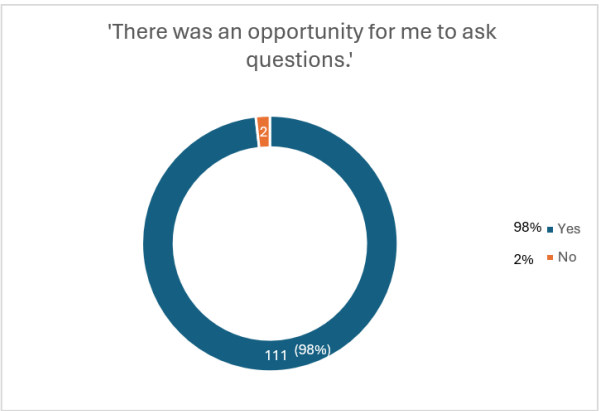
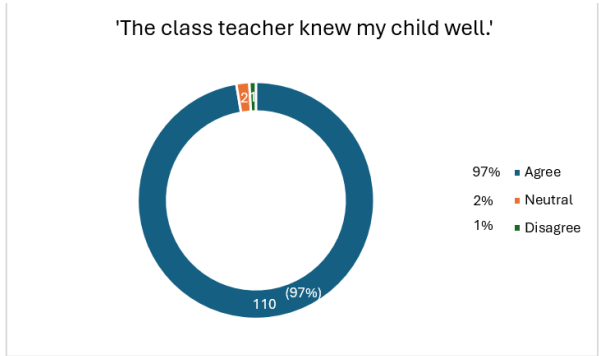
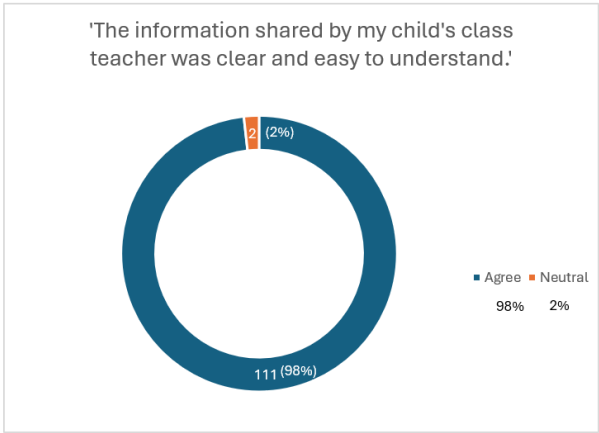
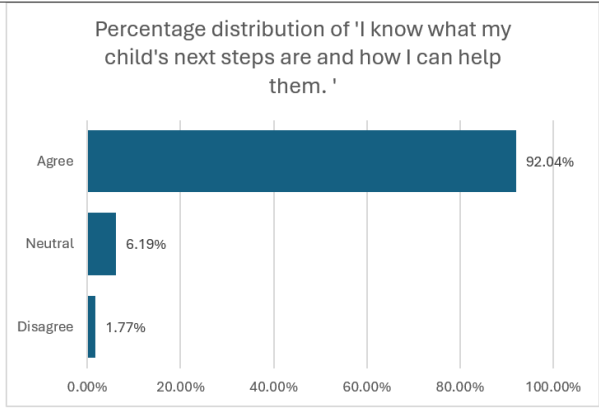
The feedback on attendance at parents' evenings confirms our view that there should be both options available for parents, and that we will continue to offer attendance both in person and virtually.

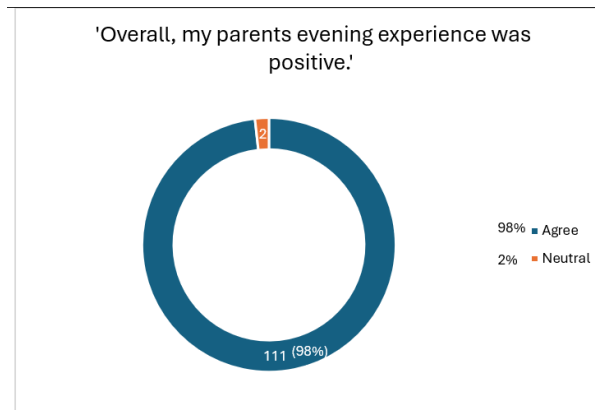
I have included the free text responses at the bottom and I responded to some of the points raised.

Once again, thank you for your feedback. This year we have decided that we are going to gather feedback through a range of shorter, more targeted surveys, as we believe it will provide us with more meaningful responses. To support this, 113 responses is higher than any parent survey we have sent out in the past two years, where the average response rate has been around 80 responses.









Any other feedback you would like to share about your parents evening experience:

Amazing thank you to the school for everything!

Appreciate the face to face time.

Both Mrs Hooper and Mrs Pyper were inviting and welcoming. They explained everything clearly and made the experience valuable.

Excellent feedback and really positive suggestions how to support our child.

Great experience, concise feedback given with acknowledgment of some of our observations around peer group conflict.

Great job as always and really appreciative of you all 😊

Great school, wonderful teachers and staff. I really appreciate how caring everyone is.

Great to have a choice re online vs in person. Good to meet staff and see the child's daily environment.

I am happy with my child's progress.

I had technical troubles as I couldn't hear using the link, when accessed from my phone (the only place I had

Dodo access. It would be better to send the links out in an email as well as on Dojo. It is not possible to copy a

link from Dojo on a phone. ***Our response: as the link is an open link, and we do not always know what email***

parents will be using, the most secure way of sharing the link is via Class Dojo. If you have a specific concern about

the link, we recommend that you contact your child's class teacher before parents evening so that they can ensure that

the meeting code is shared with you.

I think it is well organised and the option for Teams calls is great. The school is doing a great job. Thank you to all the teachers for their hard work. It is really appreciated.

Love the opportunity to come in and speak, the only thing is the 10 minutes goes too quickly!

Love this school. So grateful for everything that you do.

Lovely teachers

Mrs Fabre is fabulous

Never enough time for us to ask more questions or discuss things in more detail. Think teacher

needs space between appointments. ***Our response: whilst we appreciate that there are time constraints, we believe that 10 minutes is enough time to ensure that there are enough appointments for all parents. The evening is scheduled over three***

hours with many teachers seeing parents outside of these times for parents who are unable to attend. All teachers

are scheduled a break during the evening and we do ask that parents stick to time. We do not wish to move to a

system such as 'School Cloud', as this would automatically cut parents off after the allocated time. We do

recognise that sometimes it feels like you need longer, however, if after parents' evening you feel there are still

items that need to be discussed, the class teachers will happily arrange a follow-up with you.

Overall formal, box ticking approach to parents as well as students lacking individual and personalised approach. Typical of old school standards and practices. ***Our response: parents' evening is a***

formal event and an opportunity for class teachers to update parents on the attainment and progress of their child.

They will also attempt to cover any targets or things that can be done to further support your child. As your child

progresses through the school, it is important that the core attainment information is shared, and the older the

children get, the more specific assessment information is shared. The autumn term parents evening, has a

greater pastoral focus and the spring term parents' evening focuses mainly on attainment and progress. This is to ensure that parents are aware of how well their child is doing, rather than leaving it to the end of year report. Everyone

recognises that the time frame is set, and class teachers are often conscious that they want to get over as much information as possible.

Really happy with how much time and effort the teachers make and we really appreciate it

Thank you for all your great work

Thank you for all your hard work

Thank you for everything you do for our children. They love GKCS and it is very much their happy place, thanks to all the staff.

Thank you for giving our lot such a magic school experience!

The teachers are great and the experience was very positive.

Unfortunately I feel I must mention parking on Cryers Hill Lane and the impact with later afternoon traffic was not

difficult particularly for parents who were picking up from clubs. Maybe in future clubs should be called off to

ease traffic/parking at this busier time of day. ***Our response: whilst we appreciate that parking is a challenge, the***

continuation of after school club provision during parents' evening is important to ensure that parents who

require childcare can access it. Many parents choose to attend parents' evening whilst their child was at a

club, as this meant that they did not need to find alternative childcare arrangements.

We needed more time to go through other concerns we have. We had 10 minutes online which was not enough time for us to ask any questions.

The time should be longer as your child moves up year groups - 5 minutes is long enough for our daughter in reception, 10 minutes isn't long enough for year 3 - 15 would be better. **Our response: the average**

time allocated nationally for a parents' evening appointment is five minutes; we do not feel that five minutes is long

enough and have stuck to the 10-minute allocation. For a class of 30 children, this means that the class teacher

will have 2 hours and 30 minutes of booked appointments and talking across two evenings. To increase this time by

five minutes would increase the booked appointment times by 2.5 hours, and this would not be manageable or

reasonable. The vast majority of teachers and parents find that within the 10 minutes, the conversation naturally

draws to a close. The class teachers use Class Dojo and other communication methods to ensure that parents evening

information does not come as a surprise. All parents have the option to contact their child's teacher on Class Dojo, and

many do so to ask specific questions.

If we had the chance to look at work we would come into school for these meetings. **Our response: each term, we**

hold open classrooms for parents to look at their child's work and see the classroom. We moved this outside of

parents' evening at the request of parents, as they wanted longer to look at their child's work. Open classroom

dates are always shared in the newsletter and are well attended.

There was distraction from the other year group teacher talking but fully understand that space is

difficult. **Our response: we have tried many arrangements for parents' evening, including using the hall. Staff often**

choose to hold parents' evening appointments in one classroom; this is for the safety of all attendees.

Understand my child.

Very pleased with communication from reception teachers, great 2 way conversation. Also appreciate the option to attend remotely.

Very well organised and efficient.

Would be helpful for parents to have the opportunity to feedback about the school, there isn't an opportunity to readily do this. School should be a community that has opportunity for staff, parents and children to give feedback. ***Our response: this was an opportunity for parents to provide feedback; we have decided to break down the opportunities for feedback rather than just sending an annual survey – the response rate to this survey was significantly higher than last year's parent survey. Staff are also provided with a range of opportunities to provide feedback. There is a significant amount of work conducted on pupil voice – Miss Forbes leads on the work with the school council, and the senior leadership team hold learning reviews monthly with pupils to gain their views. The head boy and girl also provide feedback.***

You're all doing an amazing job. Our lot skip into school every morning.

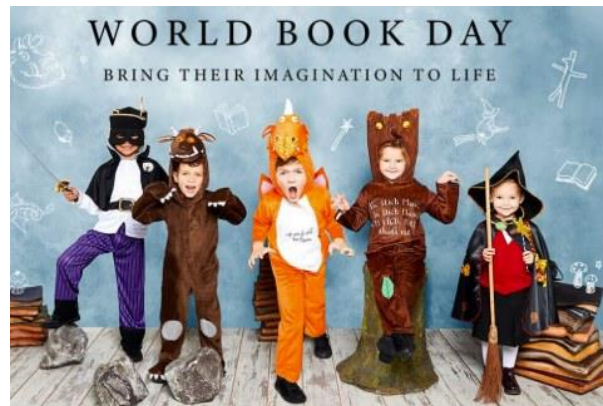
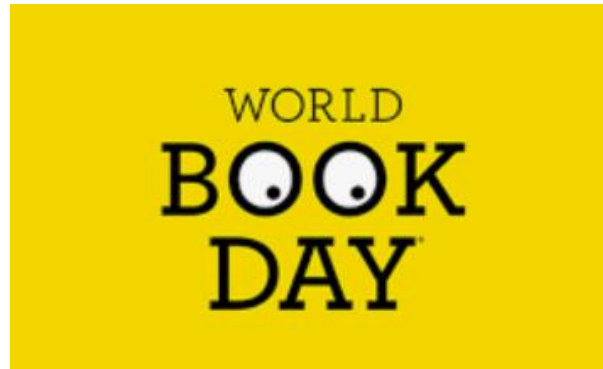
Keep up the outstanding job!

Pre-loved uniform

Next Tuesday, 4th March, there will be a pre-loved uniform sale outside of school at collection time. Please drop by and purchase any uniform you may require.

World Book Day

Next Thursday, 6th March, we will be celebrating World Book Day in school. Children are invited to come to school dressed as a character from a book, and we would love for them to be able to share some information about their character or chosen book with their classmates.



In the morning, we will share some great stories in Collective Worship, and in the afternoon, the children will have the opportunity to read to or with children from other year groups.

We can't wait to see your costumes!

Mr Hoddell

PTA Calendar

GKCS PTA

PTA Event Dates For Your Diary...

February

Crazy Hair Don't Care Disco	Friday 7 th February (After School)
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March

Festival of Holi	Friday 14 th March (After School)
Adults Quiz Night (School)	Saturday 15 th March

April

Eid al-Fitr Festival	Wednesday 2 nd April (After school)
Easter Competition	Monday 7 th – Monday 21 st April
PTA General Meeting	Thursday 24 th April

May

Walk To School Week	Monday 19 th - Thursday 22 nd May
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June

National Doughnut Day	Friday 6 th June
School Sports Day Refreshments	Tuesday 17 th - Wednesday 18 th June
National Thank A Teacher Day	Wednesday 18 th June
Summer Fair	Saturday 21 st June
Weekly Sports Sessions (MUGA)	More information coming soon
Weekly Running Club	More information coming soon

July

Summer Disco	Friday 11 th July
PTA General Meeting	Thursday 17 th July

More information on these upcoming events will be shared in due course

 https://www.instagram.com/gkcs_pta

PTA event: Holi Festival



GKCS PTA NEWSLETTER



Come and celebrate the Festival of Spring and Love!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Join us to celebrate the Hindu festival of Holi, a colourful festival and one full of fun. Find out more about Holi, the significance of the festival and its traditions on page two!

Plus, we're excited to announce, we're unveiling the **new school MUGA** on the same day!

Date: Friday 14th March

Time: After school until 5.30pm

Location: School and MUGA

How are we celebrating Holi?

- **Rangoli designing**, showcase your colourful creations!
- **Flowerpot decorating and planting seeds** to welcome Spring – this can be prepaid for via the online PTA shop for £3.50 <https://gkcs-pta.sumupstore.com/product/create-your-own-colour-splash-spring-flower-pot-holi-event>
- Colourful **balloons and glow wands** to buy on the day and keep the festivities going at home
- **Beat the Goalie** on the new MUGA. Take a shot and win a prize!
- Plus, visit our **Desi Delights Tuck Shop** for delightful treats and drinks!

If you have any questions about Holi Festival or you would like to volunteer on the day, please email pta@gkcs.school.

We hope you can make it and celebrate this wonderful and colourful festival together!

The GKCS PTA



https://www.instagram.com/gkcs_pta



GKCS PTA NEWSLETTER



What is Holi?

Also known as the Festival of Colours, the Festival of Spring, and the Festival of Love, **Holi** is primarily a **Hindu** festival, celebrated by followers of the Hindu religion. It is now a worldwide celebration and is mostly acknowledged in countries in Asia, such as India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, but everyone is encouraged to take part and enjoy the celebrations.

What is the significance of Holi?

The Holi festival has many meanings attached to it.

1. It signifies the end of winter and the beginning of spring.
2. The blossoming of love, a celebration of friends and family and the chance to make amends and repair broken relationships.
3. The triumph of good over evil.



Holi traditions

Though primarily a festival of fun and celebration, there are several traditions related to Holi:

- The lighting of the **Holika** (Hindu goddess bonfire).
- **Gulal** – colourful powder thrown around.
- **Sweets** – many foods and sweets are eaten during Holi.
- **Rangoli** – though not a Holi-specific tradition, many people will create **rangoli** patterns in front of their homes to welcome the goddess **Lakshmi** and bless its residents with wealth and good fortune.



https://www.instagram.com/gkcs_pta

PTA event: Quiz Night



The graphic features a red header with the GKCS PTA logo on the left and the text 'GKCS PTA NEWSLETTER' on the right. Below the header is a central image of a red curtain stage with a glowing 'QUIZ NIGHT' sign in the center, surrounded by question marks. The main text is on a white background with a red footer containing an Instagram icon and the URL 'https://www.instagram.com/gkcs_pta'.

Will you be crowned the GKCS quiz champions?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Brush up on your general knowledge and get ready for a night of fun and friendly competition at the GKCS PTA Quiz Night, hosted by Barnaby Moore, ex-pupil and resident quiz master.

Date: Saturday 15th March
Time: Doors open at 7pm, Quiz starts at 7.30pm until late
Location: School hall
Teams: Teams of 8 people
Entry fee: £10 per person which includes a welcome drink

Gather your brainy buddies and enjoy a great evening with fellow parents. Plus, bring your own drinks and snacks to keep those brains fuelled!

How to book your table:

- Get together a team of 8 players (no less, no more) and think of your quiz team name – the more creative, the better!
- Sign up link will go live and will be shared on **Monday 24th February** (please note it's a team sign up so full payment will be taken for all 8 quizzers at the time of booking)
- Spaces are limited, so book your team a table early.

If you have any questions about the Quiz Night, please don't hesitate to contact us at pta@gkcs.school.

We look forward to seeing you there and finding out who the best quizzers are!

The GKCS PTA

 https://www.instagram.com/gkcs_pta

Forest School News

Welcome back to another half term of Forest School. Last half term was plagued with wind, snow, rain and very cold weather. So far, we have seen a slight increase in temperature and hopefully less rain in the coming weeks. That said, this is Britain, so who knows what may be on the horizon, so please ensure waterproofs, boots, thick socks and old clothes are in school on the day along with extra plastic bags!

On that note, we seem to be running low on our spare clothes for when either people forget to bring their things, or need a change for one reason or another. If you do have any that have been borrowed, could you please return them, or if you have waterproofs that have been outgrown and need a new home, we are always willing to take them off your hands. Thanks.

We have started the year with the snowdrops blooming and other plant life starting to sprout. The birds are starting to leave their mark in certain areas and we can hear the lovely birdsong when we have a few moments of quiet up there. Rare, but it does happen!



With the work being carried out on the playground, we have had to alter a few of the routines for getting up to the woods, and all of the children so far have adapted wonderfully to it. Well done to you all. It has meant that access to our spare boots has become a little tricky with all the machinery, so please can you make sure they come in with your child.

This half term, we will be looking at knots with some of the older children, playing Viking games, and making mallets, whilst the younger children will be learning some basic tying skills and looking at ways to improve our area. A bit of spring-time planting may well be happening to encourage more bugs and insects.

As ever, in the last couple of weeks, we will be having our fire and roasting popcorn. It is always such a delight to see the awe on their faces as the kernels explode like miniature fireworks. A proper highlight!

There is a timetable for this half term below and we look forward to seeing you again in the coming weeks.

Stay muddy!

Mr Smith

Timetable for SPR2		
Day	AM	PM
Monday	Pre School	5L
Tuesday	Reception	3M
Wednesday		2F
Thursday	1T	4W
Friday		6C

Preschool admissions - September 2025

Places are rapidly filling up for Preschool admissions starting September 2025. If you would like to apply for a place, please email preschool@gkcs.school as soon as possible to ensure we can offer you the session(s) you require.

Thank you.

St. Michael's Pancake Party!

PANCAKE PARTY

@ ST. MICHAELS CHURCH HUGHENDEN



Join us at St. Michaels Church to celebrate
Shrove Tuesday (pancake day)

We will have lots of fun and games, a short celebration
and then sit down together for pancakes with lots of toppings.

4:30-6PM on the 4th March

Just £1 per child.

Scan the QR code or go to
<https://stmichaels.churchsuite.com/events/13stouta>
to sign up.

A parent/guardian will need to stay for the party




Dates - Spring Term

Below are the dates for the Spring Term. Please note that these may be edited, and more dates added, as the term progresses.

Monday 6 th January 2025	08:30	School opens for Spring Term 1
Monday 6 th January	09:00 – 11:00	New Preschool children settling-in session (no parents)
Monday 6 th January	13:30 – 15:00	New Preschool children settling-in session (no parents)
Tuesday 7 th January	10:30 – 12:00	4P first swimming session (every Tuesday)
Monday 13 th January	09:00	Open morning for prospective parents 2025
w/c Monday 3 rd February		Children's mental health week
Thursday 6 th February		Y5 Viking Day
Friday 7 th February		PTA Discos (timings and arrangements TBC)
Monday 10 th February		Reception Dinosaur Day
Tuesday 11 th February	15:30 – 18:30	Parents' Evening
Wednesday 12 th February	15:30 – 18:30	Parents' Evening
Friday 14 th February	15:15	School closes for half term
Monday 24 th February	08:30	School opens for Spring Term 2
Tuesday 25 th February		Science Fair
Tuesday 25 th February	15:20 – 16:00	Open classrooms and viewing of Science Fair
Thursday 6 th March		World Book Day
Wednesday 12 th March		Y4 Spirit of the Wild
Friday 14 th March		Y3 trip to Chiltern Open Air Museum
Friday 14 th March	After school	PTA 'Festival of Holi'
Saturday 15 th March		PTA 'Quiz Night'
Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st March		Y6 residential to Norfolk Lakes
Wednesday 2 nd April	After school	PTA 'Eid al-Fitr Festival'
Thursday 3 rd April	14:00	Y1 Easter performance to parents
Friday 4 th April	13:30	School closes for Easter holidays