



Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As always, time seems to go by so quickly these days as we start the last half term of the academic year, after a short, yet busy first half term of the Summer Term.

Just before half term, we hosted a group of school leaders from schools in Kent, as part of our work with Challenge Partners. The visit focused on inclusion, looking at our strengths and areas we want to improve. The feedback from the visit was overwhelmingly positive, with our visitors noting the inclusive nature of our school, our commitment to meeting the complex challenges we face and, most importantly the inclusive culture we have created, underpinned by really strong relationships. A big thank you to Miss Veysi who coordinated the visit, and leads our provision for pupils with special educational needs, as well as to all staff, for what they do on a day to day basis to create this culture, and yourselves, our parents and carers, who support our whole school approach to inclusion, it is so important and makes our school what it is today. For me, this year, I have seen first hand our inclusion during the Year 6 visit to Trewern, during Key Stage 2 SATs week, which for some can be a difficult experience, and, of course, it's great to be crowned Barking and Dagenham Panathlon champions again this year!

Our whole school attendance is also looking very positive this year, and much improved on last year. There is a strong correlation between good attendance at school, and achievement, both from our own internal school data and from data nationally. Whilst we understand, at times, there can be challenges, for health and personal reasons, we ask that you work with us, on any challenges, with Miss Harrington and Mr O'Byrne as key points of contact where needed.

With Key Stage 2 SATs behind us, the focus in primary schools this term now turns to Year 4 with the Multiplication Tables Check and Year 1 with the Phonics Screening Check, as well as end of year assessments and reports. We have invested significant time in recent years, on improving our transition processes. Just before half term, we hosted a Stay and Play session for children and their parents/carers who will be joining our school in Nursery or Reception in September. Following on from this, we are working on a pilot 'School Readiness' programme with external agencies, including our Family Navigator, the Early Language and Communication Team and Community Nursery Nurses. We also continue to work with Sydney Russell School: their Head of Year 7 visiting Southwood and our Year 5 children having a taster of secondary school life at Sydney Russell the week before half term. Please note that we do work closely with all local secondary schools, and those further afield to support transition for all our pupils. We are also delighted to report that we are fully staffed for September, so can focus on our internal transition programme over the coming weeks. There is a strong loyalty from the staff here at Southwood, with very few staff leaving in recent years, which is something we do value a lot, and gives the children and school community much needed stability. We will share more details of staff changes and new class information with you towards the end of term.

As the school moves towards its centenary (in 2028), we feel strongly that as a school we are an integral part of the local community and pride ourselves on being a school with that family connection, where siblings want to follow their brothers and sisters, where past pupils want to send their children, or even, one day, want to come and work. It is always great to hear about how past pupils are getting on in life, after they leave here, and they, more than anyone, are the role models for our children here at Southwood now.

Finally, there are many visits and events to look forward to this half term (see below for more details), including Sports Days, our Southwood Drama Club production of Matilda and the Southwood Summer Fete! We hope to see you there.

Kind regards,






Scott Halliwell  
Headteacher

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<p><b>Highlights from the first half of the Summer Term</b></p>  <p>(please see Class Dojo for photos/ more details)</p>	<p><b>School Events:</b> St. George's Day, 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day, Pyjamarama Day</p> <p><b>Special Events:</b> Sensory swimming, Conductive Music Workshops, Health &amp; Culture/Community Ambassadors - School Food Matters: Young Marketeers Project</p> <p><b>Year Group Workshops and Trips:</b> Wellgate Community Farm Nursery visit, Reception @ Valence Park, Year 1 Freshwater Theatre: The Great Fire of London, Year 2 @ London Stadium, Year 4 rapper and author: Breis visit, Year 5 @ Eastbrookend Country Park, Year 5 taster day @ Sydney Russell School, Year 5 @ Hertfordshire Zoo, Year 6 Junior Citizens</p> <p><b>Sporting Events:</b> Panathlon, Girls' Football vs. St Peters, Y5 &amp; 6 Basketball, Girls' Football vs. Richard Alibon</p> <p><b>Parents' Events:</b> Nursery Parents' Phonics Meetings</p>
<p><b>School Lunch Menu</b></p> 	<p>Our catering provider, BD Together, has now moved to a new system, School Grid, please speak to the School Office if you have any issues and we do recommend you pre-order your child's meal choices as you know best what they like to eat. Our 2-week lunch menu remains the same (see our school website <a href="http://www.southwoodprimary.co.uk">www.southwoodprimary.co.uk</a>) and a big thank you for bearing with us as the kitchen fan system has been out of action. We have been informed that the kitchen should be operating as normal from Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025.</p>
<p><b>Breakfast and After School Club</b></p> 	<p>Breakfast Club starts at 7:30am until 8:45am and After School Club starts at 3:15pm until 5:00pm. Mrs Lyons and her team oversee both clubs. Prices are Breakfast Club £4 per day, After School Club £5.60 per day.</p> <p>ParentPay should be used to book Breakfast Club and After School Club with payment taken in advance. If you are unable to do so, for any reason, please phone or email the School Office, however we do expect ParentPay accounts to have sufficient credit to be able to cover late bookings in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>If you are interested in using Breakfast Club or After School Club, please speak to the School Office, thank you.</p>
	<p>A reminder that staff are no longer checking messages on Class Dojo. Parents/carers can always speak with staff members who are present on the playground; phone, email or visit the School Office to make an appointment with the relevant member of staff; or pass on quick messages to teachers at drop off and pick up. We will review this arrangement when we move management information systems (MIS) towards the end of the year (December 2025).</p>
<p><b>School Places</b></p> 	<p>We are really pleased to be able to report that the school continues to be fully subscribed in many year groups but we still have some spaces available, both in current Reception and Reception for September 2025. If you or someone you know is interested, please use the following link. <a href="http://School%20admissions%20 %20London%20Borough%20of%20Barking%20and%20Dagenham%20(lbbd.gov.uk)">School admissions   London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (lbbd.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>We are also confirming Nursery places for September 2025, so if you or someone you know is interested in a place at Southwood Nursery, please contact the School Office for a short application form to complete.</p>

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<p><b>Upcoming School Events</b></p> 	<p>Week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 – Year 3 visit Eastbrookend Country Park            5th June 2025 - Y3 &amp; Y4 Athletics @ Jim Peters Stadium            Week commencing 9th June 2025 - Inspiring Futures Exhibition @ Eastbury Manor House            12th June 2025 - Aqua Class @ Eastbrookend Country Park            12th June 2025 – Girls’ Football v Monteagle            13th June 2025 - White Class @ Eastbrookend Country Park            Week commencing 16th June 2025 – Health &amp; Fitness Week (see separate letter)            18th June 2025 - Y5 &amp; Y6 Athletics @ Jim Peters Stadium            19th June 2025 – Girls’ Football v Northbury            20th June 2025 - Turquoise Class @ Eastbrookend Country Park            Week commencing 23rd June 2025 – Key Stage 1: Arts Awards            23rd June 2025 – Year 1 London River Cruise            25th June 2025 – Year 5 First Aid Workshop            27th June 2025 – Year 6 Transition Secondary Transition Day/Nursery Open Day            1st July 2025 – Southwood Drama Club presents Matilda @ Jo Richardson School            3rd July 2025 – Reception @ Chalkwell Beach            Week commencing 7th July 2025 – Science Week, Year 3 visit to Valence House &amp; Year 6 visit to Tate Modern            7th July 2025 - KS2 Gymnastics @ Robert Clack            14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Year 3 &amp; 4 Band Day            14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Southwood Summer Fete            17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Year 6 Disco            18<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Year 6 Leavers’ Assemblies</p>
 <p><b>Term Dates</b></p>	<p><b>Last day of Summer Term:</b> Friday 18th July 2025  <b>First day of Autumn Term:</b> Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025  <b>Autumn Half Term:</b> Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025  <b>Last day of Autumn Term:</b> Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025  <b>First day of Spring Term:</b> Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026  <b>Spring Half Term:</b> Week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026  <b>Last day of Spring Term:</b> Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026  <b>First day of Summer Term:</b> Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026  <b>Summer Half Term:</b> Week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026  <b>Last day of Summer Term:</b> Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2026</p>

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