



Friday 27th March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Spring Term has flown by extremely quickly, and we hope you all have a lovely Easter break. We have packed a lot into what is a relatively short term, 11 weeks in total. Neurodiversity Day today was a lovely way to end the term, and demonstrates the school's ongoing commitment to inclusion. A big thank you to our Inclusion Team, led by Mr O'Byrne and Miss Veysi, as well as our wider staff team, for all they do to support pupils at Southwood. A lot goes on that may not be noticed by many, but we know every day the care, understanding and support given can make a lot of difference to a child's experiences at school. We also really appreciate your support at our Parents/Carers' Evening earlier this month, working with you in the best interests of the children is really important here. If for any reason you have not spoken to your child's teacher, please find some time when we come back to talk to them about your child's progress and achievements.

This term, you may have noticed photographs appearing around the school. These were taken in the last academic year by our children now in Year 6, who worked with a photographer, Madelaine Waller, from Bow Arts, who we have worked in partnership with on a number of art projects. This year, our Year 4 children are working with an artist on a celebrating differences textiles project, so we look forward to seeing the outcomes in due course. Earlier this term, our Drama Club had the privilege of heading over to Sydney Russell School to watch their performance of Beauty and the Beast. What was particularly heart-warming was the number of past pupils from Southwood who have continued their drama journey over at Sydney Russell School, and the level of performance was very high. Our Southwood Drama Club production was due to take place this week, but due to staff absence, we are rescheduling for the end of June and will share details in due course. This term has also seen our choirs perform at the O2 Arena, as part of a 7,000 strong Young Voices choir and at the Barking and Dagenham Music Festival. Art, drama, music and sports continue to go from strength to strength at Southwood, and we really appreciate the effort from Mr Orr, Mrs Herbert, our Drama Team and Mr Stevens and his PE Team to make these experiences happen.

Next term, our attention turns to end of year assessments, particularly for Year 6 with the Key Stage 2 SATs in May, as well as the phonics screening check in Key Stage 1. We have been very impressed with the determination of our Year 6 children to make great progress this term, with really good attendance at extra tuition sessions before and after school and we are sure they will do their very best in May. We will also be working on getting our Year 6 children ready for the transition to secondary school, as well as preparing for our new children starting Nursery and Reception in September. Every school year seems to pass by quicker than the last, but there are lots of great visits and events to look forward to next term. In the meantime, please have a lovely two-week break, stay safe and we look forward to seeing you all again on Monday 13th April 2026 when the Summer Term begins.

Kind regards,

Scott Halliwell






<p>Highlights from the Spring Term</p>  <p>(please see Class Dojo for photos/ more details)</p>	<p>School Events: Class Photos, Safer Internet Day 2026: exploring the safe and responsible use of AI, NSPCC Number Day 2026, World Book Day, Eid, Red Nose Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Sibling Photos, Neurodiversity Day</p> <p>Special Events: STEM ambassadors to BETT, Choir @ Young Voices: O2, Drama Club to Sydney Russell Production of Beauty and the Beast, Choir @ Music Festival</p> <p>Year Group Workshops and Trips: Reception: Freshwater Theatre (Rainbow Fish), Reception to Barleylands Farm, Year 1 to Valence House (Local History), Year 2: Freshwater Theatre (Florence Nightingale), Year 2 to The Golden Hinde, Year 3 to St Paul's Cathedral, Year 4 to William Morris Gallery, Year 4 Author visit, Year 4 Bow Arts Project, Year 5 Mosque Visit & Year 6 to Valence House (World War Two)</p> <p>Sporting Events: Bikeability Years 4 & 5, Years 3 & 4 Indoor Athletics, Girls' Football v St Teresa's, Northbury & Roding, Year 5 Boys' Football v Richard Alibon, Roding & Ripple, Year 6 Boys' Football v James Cambell & Gascoigne</p> <p>Parents/Carers' Events: Reception parents/carers for World Reading Week, Reception Parents/carers Maths Project, Reception Phonics Parents/Carers Meeting, Year 5 Parents/carers Trewern meeting, Parents/Carers' Evenings & Year 6 Parents/carers SATs meeting</p>
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Headteacher: Scott Halliwell

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<p>School Places</p> 	<p>The school continues to be fully subscribed in some year groups, but has spaces in other year groups. If you or someone you know is interested, please use the following link. School admissions London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (lbbd.gov.uk)</p> <p>A reminder to parents/carers with Nursery-aged pupils, the application deadline for Reception 2026 was 15th January 2026, but you can still apply, see the link below: Starting school (children aged 3 and 4) London Borough of Barking and Dagenham</p> <p>Our Nursery is currently full, and we are now confirming Nursery places for September 2026. 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>
<p>School Gates</p> 	<p>We are going to make some small changes to the times that the school gates open and close after Easter.</p> <p>In the morning, the school gates will open at 8:40am and close promptly at 9:00am, with classroom doors opening at 8:45am and closing at 9:00am, as currently happens.</p> <p>At the end of the day, the school gates will open at 3:00pm and close promptly at 3:20pm, with Reception and Key Stage 1 classroom doors opening from 3:05pm and Key Stage 2 classroom doors opening from 3:10pm, as currently happens.</p> <p>Any children attending clubs before school should enter the school via the School Office and any children attending clubs after school will be dismissed from outside the School Office. This includes Maths Whizz and other groups which finish at 3:30pm. We kindly ask that if you are picking up your child at 3:30pm or 4:15pm when after school activity clubs finish, you wait by the caretaker's house, leaving the entrance to the School Office clear for staff, thank you.</p>
<p>School Website</p> 	<p>Please note our school website will be moving platforms over the Easter Holidays, but the website address will remain the same. The move will make it easier for the school to update and amend the information on our website, and there will be a translation facility on the home page. As part of this, we are currently reviewing the information displayed on our website, so please do let us know if there is any additional information you would find useful.</p>
<p>Breakfast and After School Club</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. 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. If you are interested in using Breakfast Club or After School Club, please speak to the School Office, thank you.</p> <p>Please note we are currently exploring the logistics of the DfE Free Breakfast programme, with a view to launching at Southwood in September 2026, more details to follow.</p>
<p>Upcoming Whole School Events & Term Dates</p> 	<p>First day of Summer Term: Monday 13th April 2026 Nursery Open Day – Friday 17th April 2026 Summer Half Term: Week commencing 25th May 2026 Nursery Open Day – Friday 12th June 2026 Southwood Drama Club Showcase – dates to be confirmed Southwood Summer Fete – Monday 14th July 2026 Last day of Summer Term: Friday 17th July 2026 First day of Autumn Term: Thursday 3rd September 2026</p>

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