



Monday 8th June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you had a lovely half term break in the hot weather, and hopefully that is just the start of our British Summer! We have had a busy half term, with our Year 6 pupils taking the end of Key Stage 2 SATs the penultimate week of the half term. We know the children did their very best, and that is all we can ask. The tests are a snapshot of what they can do in reading, spelling, punctuation, grammar and maths, and we know the children have achieved in some many different ways across their time here, not all of which can be measured in a time pressured test environment. We are very proud of them, and look forward to getting them ready for their transition to secondary school in September, with a visit from Sydney Russell already taken place and their secondary school taster days coming up at the start of July. Please also note that we do work closely with all local secondary schools, and those further afield to support transition for all our pupils.

With Key Stage 2 SATs behind us, the focus in primary schools this week turns to Year 4 with the Multiplication Tables Check and Year 1 with the Phonics Screening Check, ahead of end of year assessments and reports for all pupils.

Last week, we hosted a Stay and Play session for children and their parents/carers who will be joining our school in Reception in September and this Friday we have our second Nursery Open Day. Southwood Nursery is an important part of the school, and we know the children who attend get a great start to their education. Our Reception year provides us with some challenges as we mix those children from our Nursery with new children joining Southwood for the first time in September. This is why we have to carefully think through our transition arrangements, to allow us time to get to know the new children and their families, whilst getting the children who attended our Nursery back into the swing of school as soon as possible in September, alongside any siblings they may have here. We are very pleased to report that we are able to continue to offer the 'School Readiness' programme, for children and their families joining Nursery and Reception, which we piloted last year alongside a small number of other local schools. The programme involves working collaboratively with external agencies, including our Family Navigators, the Early Language and Communication Team and Community Nursery Nurses, with much success. A big thank you to Miss Arthur and Mrs Cook from our Early Years Team, who lead these sessions.

We are 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 arrangements for the new academic year, including new class information with you towards the end of term. We understand that any changes can be anxious for children and their families, and our Inclusion Team are always at hand to support where needed.

Our whole school attendance is in line with the national average again this year and it is important that we have a strong finish to the term. Good attendance at school, and achievement, go hand in hand and whilst we understand, at times, there can be challenges, for health and personal reasons, we ask that you work with us, with Miss Harrington and Mr O'Byrne as key points of contact where needed.

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

Kind regards,

Scott Halliwell
Headteacher

Headteacher: Scott Halliwell

SOUTHWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Highlights from the first half of the Summer Term  (please see Class Dojo for photos/ more details)	School Events: St Georges' Day, Class Photographs Year Group Workshops and Trips: Nursery Farm visit, Reception to Valence Park, Year 1 London Boat trip, Year 2 to the London Olympic Stadium, Year 4 Bow Arts workshops, Year 4 to Valence House, Year 5 virtual author visit, Year 6 author visit Sporting Events: Year 5 Bike Club, Year 6 swimming lessons, The Den swimming lessons Parents/Carers' Events: Nursery Open Day, Nursery Phonics meeting, Year 1 Phonics meeting
School Places 	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 (lb-bd.gov.uk) A reminder to parents/carers with Nursery-aged pupils, the application deadline for Reception 2026 was 15th January 2026, but we still have spaces and you can still apply, see the link below: Starting school (children aged 3 and 4) London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Please note we currently have 30-hour, morning and afternoon Nursery places for September 2026 available, with Rising 3s welcome. 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.
Summer Holiday Camp @ Southwood	We are delighted to partner with Skill Sports to launch Southwood Summer Camp for the very first time this year. This Camp is part of the wider Barking and Dagenham Summer Holiday Activities Programme, with places available for benefit-related free school meal pupils as well as paid for places. The Camp will run Monday to Friday for 3 weeks from Monday 27th July, from 9am to 3pm, mostly with school staff. Flyers available from Mr Raybe.
Breakfast and After School Club 	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. Current 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. Please note the DfE supported Universal Free Breakfast programme, will be launching at Southwood in September 2026, more details to follow. Although this programme operates 30 minutes before normal school opening, please be reassured that we still intend to offer a paid for Breakfast Club option from 7:30am for those parents/carers who need this.
Upcoming Whole School Events & Term Dates 	Nursery Open Day – Friday 12th June 2026 Health & Fitness Week – week commencing 15th June 2026 Barking & Dagenham Secondary Transition Days – Thursday 2nd & Friday 3rd July 2026 Science Week – week commencing 6th July 2026 Southwood Drama Club Showcase – week commencing 6th July 2026 Southwood Summer Fete – Tuesday 14th July 2026 Last day of Summer Term: Friday 17th July 2026 including Year 6 Leavers' Assembly First day of Autumn Term: Thursday 3rd September 2026

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