



Friday 17th July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, thank you for supporting our Sports Days in June, which seem a long time ago now, as we (hopefully) near the end of the 3rd heatwave of the Summer! Apologies too for postponing the Southwood Summer Fete due to the relentless heat, however, we will be in touch at the start of next term with a new date, and something to look forward to at the start of next term. We also took the difficult decision to cancel our Southwood Drama Club production at the end of this term, however, we are already starting to plan our next show, likely to take place in March 2027!

Due to the delay in Key Stage 2 SATs results, only received in schools yesterday, and the change in our MIS, it has taken longer than expected to get reports out to you, however, they are being given to the children today. Apologies for the delay, however it is a good time of year to reflect on all the successes each and every child has achieved this year as well as the challenges they have overcome. They should be very proud, we are and we know you are too!

It is that time to say goodbye to our Year 6 cohort of children who will be heading off to the secondary school at the start of September. As I said at their Leavers' Assemblies this week, this cohort are full of personality, energy and talent and have the potential to go on and succeed at whatever they choose to do in the future. For some of them, who joined us in Nursery, Southwood has been a part of their life for 8 years, so a big change is ahead. Their journeys here, however long or short, have been about growth, friendships, ups and downs, memories, which can last a lifetime, and most of all a sense of belonging and community. However; now we have arrived at the end of term, we know they are ready, for whatever lies ahead for them, and they leave Southwood with our best wishes for the future.

As I often say, it is our children here at Southwood that make the school what it is and we are very proud of all of them. All we ask is they come back and share their future successes with us. It is always a highlight for me personally, and the school when pupils from the past visit to let us know how they are getting on and what they have achieved, whether that is Year 7s in the first few weeks of September, older students when picking up younger siblings, at School Events, in Year 10 or 12 for work experience or as young adults who have completed GCSEs, A Levels, apprenticeships or university degrees. For those Southwood families whose time, however long or short, here comes to an end today, thank you for all your support over the years you have been involved with the school. We do not always get everything right, but as in all families, we try and work through with you when times are difficult and celebrate the good times with you too and, like the children, you are always welcome back.

A lot of work behind the scenes has been taking place on transitions, with the children meeting their new teachers this week. We know that change can be difficult for some children, and some adults, so please do reach out in September if you or your child need some extra support. Strong relationships, something we do really value, grow across an academic year and over the years, and it can take some time to adjust.

Today we are saying goodbye to some members of staff. Mrs Page, a former pupil at Southwood, is retiring after 21 years here as our Office Manager. She truly has Southwood in her blood, and I am sure will be back to see us as soon as she is back from her travels! Mrs Phillips is also on her travels, relocating to Australia after the Summer. Miss Palmer from our School Business Office and Mrs Rahman, who has worked in our Den are also leaving today. We thank them all for all their hard work over their time at Southwood and wish them the very best for the future.

Please note the first day for children in the new academic year 2026/27 is Thursday 3rd September 2026. We look forward to seeing you all again then. In the meantime, we wish the children, the staff and yourselves a lovely Summer Break, to re-energise ready for the new academic year. Please take care and stay safe.

Kind regards,

Scott Halliwell

Headteacher: Scott Halliwell

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Highlights from the second half of the Summer Term  (please see Class Dojo for photos/ more details)	School Events: Health & Fitness Week including Sports Days and Sports Hero Day, Science Week, Whole School Transition, Brass Band & Wind Band Concerts, Picnic Day Special Events: Drama Club to Abba Voyage, Art Ambassadors Film Project, London Symphony Orchestra Creative SEND Project including visit to The Barbican, Year 5 Arts Awards, Band Day, Y3/4/5 SEND musician sessions Year Group Workshops and Trips: Reception to Shoeburyness Beach, Year 1 to Valence House Gardens, Year 1 Freshwater Theatre: Great Fire of London, Year 3 to Eastbrookend Country Park, Year 3 to Valence House Museum, Year 4 to The Chase, Year 4 to Leigh-on-Sea, Year 5 to Colchester Zoo, Year 5 First Aid workshops, Year 6 to Natural History Museum, Year 6 LBBd Secondary Transition Days, Year 6 MHST transition workshops, Year 6 to bowling, Year 6 to Jimmy's @ O2, Year 6 Disco, Year 6 Leavers' Assembly Sporting Events: Year 6 swimming lessons, The Den swimming lessons, Panathlon @ East London Finals (we finished runners-up!) Parents/Carers' Events: Nursery Open Day, Stay & Play for new Reception children and parents/carers, School Readiness Group
School Places 	The school continues to be fully subscribed in some year groups, but has spaces in other year groups, including Reception for September 2026. If you or someone you know is interested, please use the following link. School admissions London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (lbbd.gov.uk) Please note we still have some 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 via email 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. The Camp is fully subscribed and will run for 3 weeks from Monday 27th July.
Universal Breakfast Club 	Please note the DfE supported Universal Free Breakfast programme, will be launching at Southwood in September 2026. Mr O'Byrne has shared an expression of interest form and we will share further details with you at the start of September. Although this programme operates 30 minutes before normal school opening, please be reassured that we will still offer a paid for Breakfast Club option from 7:30am for those parents/carers who need this.

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