



MAPLE GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

18.9.26

Reading books and P.E kits need to be in school every day.



As we finish our second week back, it has been wonderful to see improvements in behaviour, children reading three times a week and some excellent home learning being returned. Thank you for your continued support. The children are also looking very smart in their uniforms. Please make sure they have their PE in school every day.

I have been proud to celebrate their fantastic work with golden house points, and teachers have enjoyed recognising achievements with praise postcards.

We know behaviour remains a key focus this term, and by working together, we can continue to make positive progress. Thank you for your support in helping us make such a positive start to the term!



To celebrate NATIONAL FITNESS DAY, the whole school took part in an exciting competition featuring a range of movement and fitness activities. All pupils showed fantastic enthusiasm, and the final scores were incredibly close! We look forward to announcing the winners on Monday!

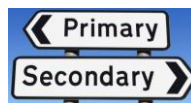
BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

The school site is busy at drop-off and pick-up times. For everyone's safety, please remind children that ball games are not permitted, and bikes and scooters must be pushed through the grounds. Children using the climbing frames must be supervised by a parent or carer, who takes full responsibility for them. Thank you for your cooperation..

SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS – SEPTEMBER 2027

A reminder to our Year 6 parents and carers that applications for secondary school places are now open. Please apply through the [Hertfordshire County Council School Admissions Portal](#).

- Applications opened: 1 September 2026
 - Application deadline: 31 October 2026
 - National Offer Day: 1 March 2027
 - Deadline to accept or decline offers: 8 March 2027
- Please ensure you submit your application before the deadline.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS



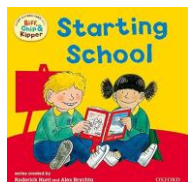
PRIMARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS – SEPTEMBER 2027

Applications for Reception, Junior and Middle School places open on 2 November 2026. Key dates:

- Applications open: 2 November 2026
- Application deadline: 15 January 2027

Apply online through the [Hertfordshire County Council School Admissions Portal](#).

Come and visit us! We have several open days planned and would love to welcome prospective families to our school. Please sign up for an open day [here](#). We look forward to meeting you!



CELEBRATE

These children have demonstrated our 3 R's and have had an A.C.E week. We are very proud of them.



Reception : Theo and Lyla

Year 1 : Kiara and Oyinmiebi – Jasmine

Year 2 : Elise – Mae and Rebecca

Year 3 : Jacob and Harrison

Year 4 : Freddie and Tilly

Year 5 : Olivia and Oscar

Year 6 : Angela and James



Attendance Matters!



ATTENDANCE

Whole-school target— 95%

Whole-school attendance this week — 91%

Nursery - 84%

Reception - 91%

Year 1 - 90%

Year 2 - 92%

Year 3 - 93%

Year 4 - 88%

Year 5 - 95%

Year 6 - 91%

Well done Year 5 for a great start to the academic year!

Thank you also for ensure your child is in school on time!

If your child is going to be absent from school, please let us know by [emailing](#) or calling 01442 214966, where you can also leave a message.

Please note that absences can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.



EYFS and KS1 Don't Miss Out on Free School Lunches!

Did you know that all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a FREE school lunch every day? Make the most of this fantastic opportunity and save money on packed lunches! Simply order your child's meal through Arbor. View our delicious lunch menu here: View the school lunch menu [here](#)

Please ensure you order your child's school lunch even if your child is having a packed lunch. If no order has been placed, we will contact you to provide a packed lunch.

Don't forget to visit our school [website](#) for information on what your child will learn this year, including details for each subject.

LEARNING

Year 3

This week Year 3 had an exciting music lesson in the hall with our fun and fluffy friend the otter. We also took part in the fitness fun! Dancing and exercising.



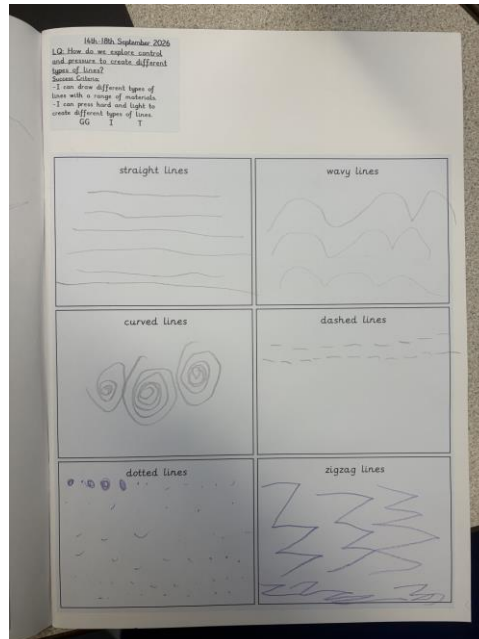
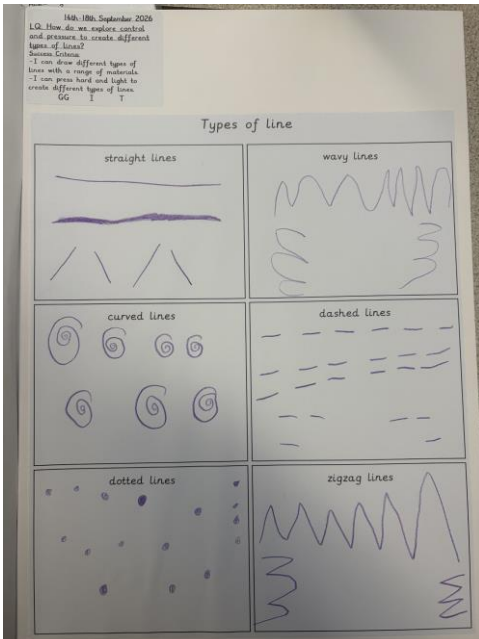
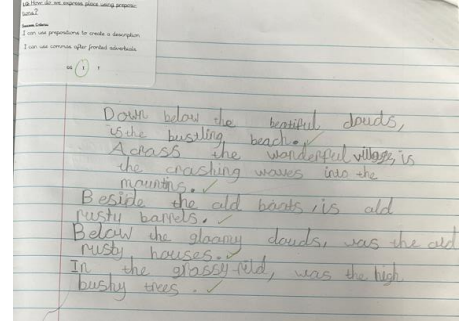
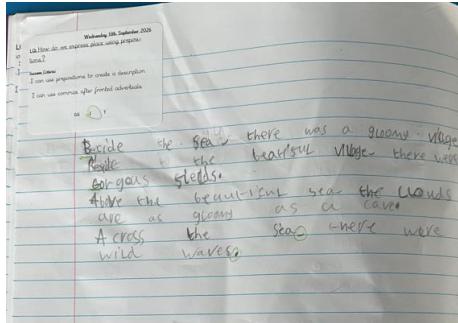
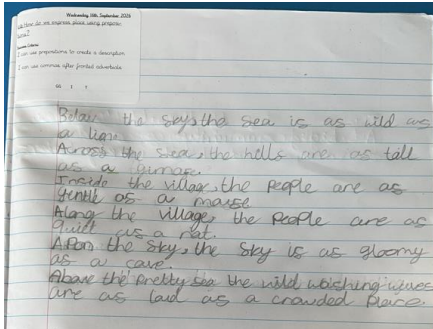
Nursery

Nursery have been learning about how to use the book area. We have looked at how we carefully turn the pages and how we hold the books the right way up. We have also been practising how to choose a book, sit comfortably, and put it back on the shelf when we are finished. The children have enjoyed exploring different stories.



Year 4

In Literacy, Year 4 have been developing their writing skills using fronted adverbials. From setting the scene to adding extra detail, the children have impressed us with their creativity and growing confidence as writers.



Year 1

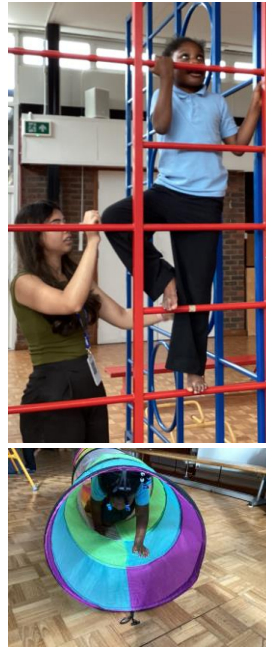
This week, the children in Year 1 have been exploring different types of lines in Art. They experimented with using a variety of lines to create their own pictures.

Reception

We have been exploring mark-making using a variety of resources and materials, including chalk, pens and sand. The children have enjoyed experimenting with different textures, movements and ways of creating marks.



The HIVE



The children developed their gross motor skills through climbing, jumping, crawling, rolling, throwing, balancing and swinging on the obstacle course.



Year 2

This week, Year 2 have taken their Sports Challenge very seriously! The children showed fantastic determination, enthusiasm and teamwork as they tackled a range of activities. It was wonderful to see everyone giving their best, encouraging one another and having lots of fun along the way. Well done, Year 2!



Please read with your child at least three times a week and remember to sign their reading record. Home learning will be sent home every Thursday and should be completed and returned to school by the following Tuesday.

INFORMATION

WHEN DOES MY CHILD GO TO THE LIBRARY?



Please make sure that library books are returned to school once a week.

Reception and Nursery - Friday

Year 1 - Monday

Year 2 - Thursday

Year 3 - Friday

Year 4 - Wednesday

Year 5 - Monday

Year 6 - Tuesday

WHEN IS MY CHILD'S PE LESSON?



Please keep P.E. kits at school every day. However, your child's main P.E. lessons, led by Mr Timi, take place on:

Reception and Nursery - Thursday
 Year 1 - Monday and Wednesday
 Year 2 - Monday and Friday
 Year 3 - Tuesday and Thursday
 Year 4 - Tuesday and Swimming on Wednesday
 Year 5 - Wednesday and Thursday
 Year 6 - Friday and Wednesday

SEPTEMBER

21st - 25th : House Captains/School Council voting

23rd : Health and safety audit

OCTOBER

1st : 9am Yr5 Sharing Assembly

5th - 9th : Space week

6th : 8:40-9am Nursery Monthly Stay and Play

13th : 3:30 pm - 6pm Parents Evening

14th : 3:30 pm - 5:30pm Parents Evening

15th : 9am Yr4 Sharing Assembly

16th : Individual photos

19th : Flu vaccinations

22nd : 9:30am EYFS Prospective Families Tour

23rd : Inset day

26th-30th—Half Term

NOVEMBER

3rd : 8:40-9am Nursery Monthly Stay and Play

4th : 9:30am EYFS Prospective Families Tour

5th : 9am Yr3 Sharing Assembly

11th : Year 6 school nurse

12th : 2.30pm EYFS Prospective Families Tour

16th : Odd sock day

16th- 20th : Anti Bullying Week

18th : 2.30pm EYFS Prospective Families

Tour

19th : Yr2 Sharing Assembly

24th : Yr 6 health questionnaires

25th : Wonderful work Wednesday



DECEMBER

3rd : Yr1 Sharing Assembly

3rd : Flu vaccination

8th : 8:40-9am Nursery Monthly Stay and Play

9th : 9am KS1 Performance

11th : 9:30am Carols at Church

14th : 2:30pm Reception Mingle and Jingle

15th : Christmas lunch

15th : Christmas Jumper day

15th : 11:15am Nursery Mingle and Jingle

17th : End of term assembly - invite only

18th : Class Parties

18th : 3:15pm End of Term

JANUARY

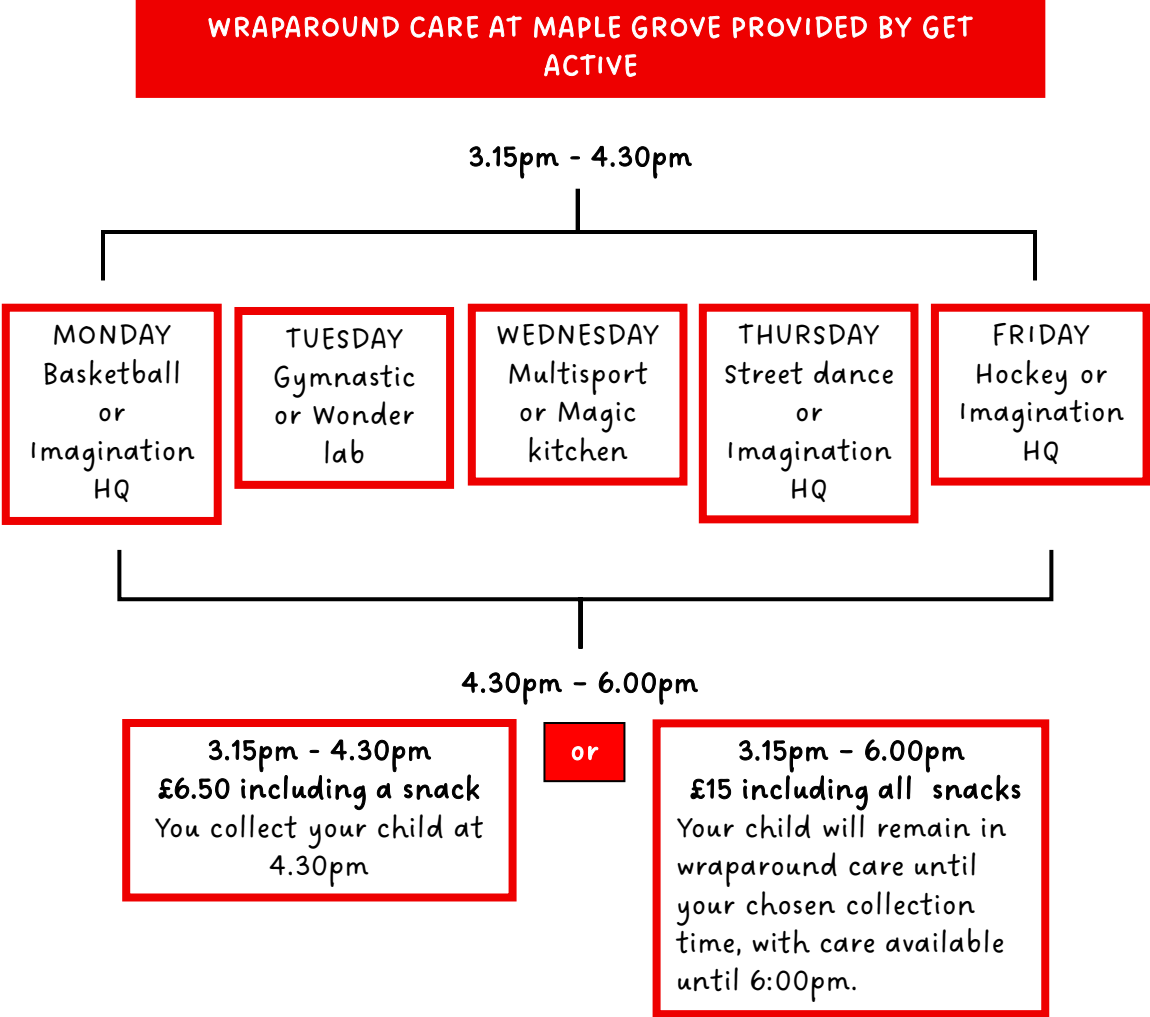
4th : Inset day

5th : First day of the spring term

Please also check the website for further dates that may be added

AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION

Our after-school clubs and care are provided by Get Active, offering a full range of activities and childcare options. The diagram below outlines the provision available to families. Sunrise Club continues to be run by the school and can be booked through Arbor.

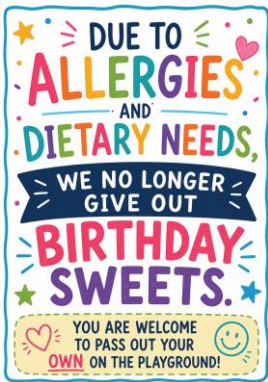


How to Book

Visit getactivesports.com and:

- 1.Select Wraparound
 - 2.Choose Maple Grove Primary School
 - 3.View live availability and book
- Prefer to speak to Get Active? Call 01344 860 868

Allergy Awareness



We will be contacting parents who have informed us that their child has a dietary requirement, asthma or an allergy. This is to ensure our records are up to date and that we have the correct medication in school if needed.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about CHARACTER.AI

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Character.AI is an entertainment platform where users create and chat with AI-powered characters. These chatbots can act like existing favourite characters from movies or books, or like friends, mentors, or even romantic partners, responding in an emotional, personally engaging way. Although this can encourage creativity, it can also make a generated conversation feel like a genuine relationship, which is concerning if it takes the place of human relationships.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

AI replies are generated in real time rather than chosen from a fully checked script. Even with safety filters on, conversations can still move into sexual, violent, discriminatory, or self-harm material. These AI characters are often made by users, so a familiar name or child-friendly description does not guarantee that every response from the character will be suitable for a young person.

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

Characters on Character.AI can use the language of friendship, love, and empathy without ever feeling anything. Vulnerable young people may struggle to separate this simulation from genuine understanding. Romantic role-play or a character that demands attention, loyalty, or secrecy could also risk distorting young people's expectations around consent, disagreement, and the give-and-take involved in healthy human relationships.

UNRELIABLE ADVICE

Characters, like other chatbot platforms, are at risk of inventing facts or giving inappropriate advice while sounding completely confident. Characters may also echo a young person's assumptions instead of questioning them. This can become particularly risky when users rely on a character for guidance about health, mental wellbeing, relationships, money, or personal safety instead of checking with a credible source or trusted adult.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Character.AI chatbots can appear endlessly attentive, supportive, and affectionate, which is one of the hallmarks of the generative AI models that such companions are built on. A young person may start turning to a character chatbot whenever they feel lonely or upset and believe that it understands them better than the humans in their life. This can become more concerning when chatting starts to replace sleep, schoolwork, hobbies and friendships.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Character.AI chats may feel private, especially when a bot sounds personal and caring, but they take place on a company's online systems. Users could intentionally or unintentionally reveal their name, school, location, routines, images, or intimate concerns. Character.AI says some data may be retained to improve its services and AI models, so young people should never treat a chatbot like a confidential diary.

UNHEALTHY ENGAGEMENT

Be aware of warning signs such as secret accounts, bypassing age restrictions, hiding phone use from adults, chatting late at night, distress when access to the platform or character stops, withdrawal from other people, falling interest in school, or believing the character is conscious. Increased use may also signal that the young person is already lonely, anxious, or seeking help.

Advice for Parents & Educators

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Ask what the young person enjoys about Character.AI and invite them to show you how the platform and their favourite characters work. Useful questions include, "Has it ever said something that felt wrong?" and "How can you tell it doesn't have feelings?" Avoid shaming them for using platforms like Character.AI or making them feel there is something wrong with them for doing so.

PAUSE, CHECK AND ASK

Teach young people to pause before accepting an answer from characters on Character.AI. Encourage them to check important claims against a trustworthy source and ask a safe adult when the issue matters. Never use a character as the sole source of medical, mental health, legal, financial, or safeguarding advice. Remind them not to share passwords, contact details, school information, live locations, or private images.

CHECK AGE, SETTINGS & LIMITS

Character.AI's minimum age is 16 in the UK, but open-ended companion chat is restricted to adults aged 18 or over. Users aged 16 to 17 receive a different experience built around guided 'Stories' and other creative or social features. Check their current settings, never help or encourage a young person to give a false age, and apply the same safety rules to other chatbot apps.

NOTICE AND RESPOND

Take action if chats involve sexual content, threats, coercion, abuse, self-harm or danger. Save relevant evidence, report the character and follow the settling's safeguarding process; educators should involve the designated safeguarding lead. If anyone is in immediate danger, contact emergency services. Childline is available on 0800 1111 and the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is an educator with almost 30 years' experience across teaching, school leadership and governance. He works internationally supporting schools and colleges with AI leadership and governance and [insert NC courses I have written].



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Workshops October - December 2026

Workshops are open to all young people & parents/carers of children and young people who attend a school or are registered with a GP in Hertfordshire. A referral is not needed to access a workshop.



All workshops are currently being delivered online via Microsoft Teams. For more information about what each workshop covers and to book a place onto a workshop, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hct-childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-33494371787>

Workshop	Date & Time
Emotional Wellbeing (For Young People 11-16) A workshop focused on adolescents managing their own emotional wellbeing and things parents/carers can do to help.	Tuesday 3 November 6-8pm
Supporting Adolescents with Self-Esteem A workshop focused on adolescents improving their self-esteem and what parents can do to support.	Monday 23 November 6-8pm
Supporting your Child's Self-Esteem and Resilience A workshop focused on parents/carers supporting their child to improve their self-esteem and resilience.	Wednesday 14 October 6-8pm Tuesday 8 December 10am – 12pm
Supporting with Sleep Difficulties This workshop focuses on supporting children and adolescents with managing their sleep difficulties and things parents/carers can do to help.	Tuesday 29 October 6-8pm Monday 14 December 6-8pm
Developing your Child's Emotional Literacy A workshop focused on parents supporting their child with developing emotional literacy.	Wednesday 21 October 10am-12pm Tuesday 10 November 6-8pm Wednesday 16 December 10am-12pm
General Emotional Wellbeing and Regulation Tips for Parents/Carers A workshop focused on parents supporting their child's general emotional wellbeing and ability to emotionally regulate.	Tuesday 6 October 6-8pm Wednesday 18 November 10am-12pm Tuesday 1 December 6-8pm

To access the recorded **Emotionally Based School Avoidance Webinar** please visit:
<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/service-details/service/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-21/>