What a wet and miserable half term. It has barely stopped raining during the past six weeks! Thank goodness that we have had some exciting and fun activities going on in school to make pupils and staff feel uplifted and positive. You can read more about them inside including the ski trip to Italy, the cycling in Leatherhead, 999 emergencies and the visit by the Kinetic Theatre Group.

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on where we are regarding the re-surfacing works in Fortyfoot Road. The work is currently programmed to be completed, weather permitting, during half term week. It is anticipated that the works will take approximately 3 days. Access for residents and the school will be maintained where ever possible and if safe to do so, but there is a possibility that there will be delays to traffic whilst the new surface is being laid. Following on from the resurfacing works SCC are proposing to undertake major drainage works to increase the capacity of the soakaways which involves using a large drilling rig. This will require the road to be closed by each soakaway, however access to the school will be maintained as the roundabout will operate 2 way traffic. These works have been programmed from 20th February to 14th March depending on weather conditions.

Let’s hope that the weather at half term is good so that the road works can be undertaken without delay.

May I take this opportunity to remind all parents, staff and Governors of the Friends of Woodlands quiz night on Friday 7th March at 7.15 (for 7.30 start). This is always a very good evening with a mix of fun and an opportunity to learn new things. Tickets are available from Nicky at reception. This is advance warning to give you the chance to organise a table of your own and to make sure that you get all the tickets that you want. Flyers will be sent out soon and we look forward to seeing you.

To enhance the school and its facilities we are always looking for new projects. We would like to develop a ‘Sensory Library’. Chris Richards has recently been appointed as our fundraiser and is currently looking for interesting items to be auctioned at ‘The Spring Ball’ on the 22nd March. All the funds raised will go towards this exciting project. If you know of a contact or friend who would have something special that would make an interesting auction lot which they would like to donate to the school, please contact Chris Richards in the upper school admin office.

Can I wish you all a very happy and restful half term holiday? I truly hope that the weather improves and that we see at least a little sunshine during the week. School re-opens on Monday 24th February at 9.15.

Kind regards,
Adrienne Knight
Head teacher
MENCAP HOLIDAY ACTIVITY

Mid Surrey MENCAP have asked us to let parents know that bookings are now being taken for their play schemes in 2014.

The dates are:
Easter: Tuesday 15\textsuperscript{th} – Thursday 17\textsuperscript{th} April
Summer:
  Week 1: Monday 28\textsuperscript{th} July – Friday 1\textsuperscript{st} August
  Week 2: Monday 4\textsuperscript{th} August – Friday 8\textsuperscript{th} August
Each young person attending has a 1:1 support playworker.
Activities include parks, trampoline, bouncy castle, trips out and swimming.
For further information call Stephen Dyke on 01372 374555 or email Stephen@midsurreymencap.wanadoo.co.uk

SURREY SPECIAL SCHOOL’S SKI TRIP 2014

A huge thank you to Zara, Helen, Julie, Rosie and Ella, of course to Sheila too, for organising and running an amazing ski trip to Prato Nevoso in Italy in February.
The Surrey Special School ski trip is a specially arranged week away, where pupils can try this amazing sport in a safe environment. My son Thomas in Elmwood class who is in a wheelchair and has to walk with assistance was able to enjoy trying skiing both upright and on a specially adapted assisted ski.
He thoroughly enjoyed it and also spending time socially with his friends in the evenings and with the staff who made the week such a memorable time.
It was an incredible opportunity.
Thank you. (Lucy, Thomas’s mum).

DATES FOR THE DIARY:
3\textsuperscript{rd} March – No school, staff training
6\textsuperscript{th} March – 2pm Parents PODD chat
7\textsuperscript{th} March - 2pm Parents tea + chat Upper School
7\textsuperscript{th} March - F.O.W. Quiz Night
14\textsuperscript{th} March – Parent’s PODD course
19\textsuperscript{th} March – Transition Information 7.15 Upper School
20\textsuperscript{th} March - 2pm Parents PODD chat
22\textsuperscript{nd} March - Spring Ball
3\textsuperscript{rd} April - 2pm Parents PODD chat
4\textsuperscript{th} April – Easter Assembly 10.30
School ends 1-00. Break up for Easter.

EASTER ACTIVITY

Anni Rhodes from “Head2Head” has asked me to let you know of a performance they are holding at Woodlands School in the Easter Holidays.

Head2Head is a great favourite with the pupils at Woodlands as everyone can join in their imaginative and lively theatre.

Anni says:

“Following on from last year’s popular summer event at Polesden Lacey, we have secured some funding from Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council, to stage another interactive performance storytelling event for young people with disabilities, their siblings and wider family members and friends.

Entry will be free for each young person and their accompanying carer. All other members of the party will be charged £5 each.

We have morning or afternoon slots available in the following areas:

\textbf{Monday 14 April: Leatherhead, Woodlands School (disabled toilet with hoist)}
\textbf{Tuesday 15 April: Merrow (accessible toilets)}
\textbf{Wednesday 16 April: Merrow (accessible toilets)}
\textbf{Thursday 17 April: Merrow (accessible toilets)}
\textbf{Good Friday 18 April: Oxshott (accessible toilets)}
\textbf{Easter Saturday 19 April: Oxshott (accessible toilets)}

During each 50-minute session the young people (with siblings and carers) will explore the venue, discovering scenes and meeting characters from the story.
If weather permits, some of the action will take place outdoors. Whatever the weather, we will also provide games, a sensory tent and an eating area, so bring along a picnic to enjoy before or after your booked session.
Each venue offers plenty of parking spaces and accessible toilet facilities (hoist available at Leatherhead venue).
Please have a look at our website and, if you are interested, contact us as soon as possible as we expect this event to be extremely popular:

\url{http://www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/special-needs/summer-activity}

Kind regards, Anni
SQUIRRELS’ NEWS

This term we have been looking at the topic “999-what's your emergency?”
We have been looking at the police, firemen and ambulance services and what they do.
Squirrels class have done lots of dressing up and art activities based on this topic. We made a police car and our own fire engines with firemen. We went on a police themed listening and looking walk to the park, to look for items of the colour “blue” and to see if we could hear any sirens.
We were police on bikes in the playground and followed a track we made.
We have also enjoyed the resonance board visits this term; making lots of different noises. Many of the children have been making progress in their horse riding lessons and others have been enjoying music therapy sessions.
We are looking forward to World Book day and are in preparation for this.

ORCHARD’S NEWS

During the 1st half of the spring term, Orchard Class have been learning about heating and cooling in science by exploring heat transfer and how materials change when introduced to varying temperatures. A particular favourite was melting chocolate and making our own biscuits. In History we learned about the voyages and discoveries of Captain Cook on his journeys on board Endeavour. In Art our topic, “Spring has Sprung” saw students observing the work of and creating their own fantastic pieces based on a variety of artist’s styles, works and techniques including Pointillism and Abstract Expressionism. In RE we have been asking the question “Who is Jesus”? We talked about his teaching, his early life and about his compassion for others. We have explored the story of creation and produced our own pictures of the elements that occurred during each day of the story. Our core book for English has been “The Gruffalo” and we have listened to and watched the story delivered and presented in a variety of ways including on video, power-point and audio.

NEWS FROM LEATHERHEAD RDA

LEATHERHEAD RDA think hard about the comfort and interests of Woodlands pupils. They have equipped a small classroom where pupils can engage in activities, have their snack and be comfortable and warm whilst waiting for their turn to ride.
A big “Thank you” from the Tuesday and Friday riding groups.

KINETIC THEATRE VISIT WOODLANDS

All the students in the Upper School and Owls enjoyed a Science Show by the Kinetic Theatre group earlier this term. The story was based in an old school where things had gone wrong. Students were introduced to the properties of familiar materials and magnets and these were then used to solve the problems. There was plenty of interaction and music involved in the production and it was thoroughly enjoyed by all students and staff.
**OWLS’ NEWS**

“Call 999 Emergency” has been the theme for this term. Owls have done lots of acting and dressing up as well as investigating vehicles, uniforms and equipment. They had lots of fun acting out and then writing their own emergencies. Here are a few of their ideas:

“Crash Bang a Car Accident”  “Help My Cat is Stuck in a Tree”

“Big Fire at the Hotel”  “Someone has fallen over call an ambulance”

In science we have been investigating the sounds around us. We went on a sound walk and made a tally chart of the number of times we heard birds sing or a car engine roar. Owls really enjoyed playing our own version of ‘Blind Man’s Bluff’, when we covered our eyes and tried to identify the classroom sounds; like a keyboard tapping, a chair scraping and water running.

**RAISING MONEY FOR MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE**

This term, Rabbits and Pinewood have been planting daffodil bulbs in the pots sent to use by Marie Curie Cancer Care. Students have had lots of fun pouring water onto the soil discs and watching them grow. Then they have been putting the soil into a pot and planting a daffodil bulb. We have sold the plant pots at Parents Evening (maybe you bought one?) and in the staff room and have raised £40.

**WHAT HAVE WE BEEN COOKING?**

This term, students have been exploring Easter foods from around the world. We started by making pancakes fruit faces – Pinewood explored the ingredients through touch and smell, Orchard tossed some pancakes (David’s pancake hit the ceiling!) and everyone enjoyed eating them...

We also made ‘Capirotada’, a spiced Mexican bread pudding with quite a strange list of ingredients – bread triangles, custard, cinnamon, pineapple and grated cheese!

After cooking it for 20 minutes, we ate it – to mixed reviews. Mrs Knight even joined us and reportedly enjoyed it!

Lately, students have been making Simnel cake, a traditional Easter cake, made from fruit cake, covered in marzipan and then decorated. Elmwood make some beautiful cakes and Thomas Normile won the best cake competition.

**SOUNDABOUT TRAINING**

Staff and pupils thoroughly enjoyed training from Steve from Sounds of Intent this term. Together they learned to use their voices, bodies and the resonance boards to communicate.

The children were mesmerised by the quality of the sound, the pace and rhythm of the sessions. Staff and pupils alike lost their inhibitions and joined in enthusiastically. Badgers and Rabbits sat on the resonance boards, felt the vibration and joined in. Steve visited us three times through this half term and each time the classes he visited were enthralled. Classes now use the boards regularly to encourage interaction though we can’t quite replicate the impact that Steve’s deep, strong male voice achieved.

See photos in Badgers’ and Squirrels’ news items.
999 Emergency
In
Rabbits Class
This half term we have been working on the topic "999 Emergency". We have learnt a new song which is great fun, called “Nee Naw, Ambulance/Police Car/ Fire Engine is coming Move Out The Way”. We have also found out about different alarms and sirens including the school fire alarm and taken part in a fire drill practice as we do every term. We have had lots of dressing up sessions pretending to be policeman, nurses and fire men.

In art we made some lovely fire engines using egg boxes and oodles of red paint! In another activity we made models of policemen wearing their uniforms. Rabbits have really enjoyed exploring this topic.

BEECHWOOD NEWS
This term, Beechwood have enjoyed our topic of 'New Beginnings'. In Geography, we learnt about land formations. Everyone enjoyed watching our class volcano erupt.

In art, we have been learning about post-modernist artists and have tried out a variety of new techniques. E.g. Rothko. It has been messy but fun for everyone!

CYCLING
This term Ashwood and one of the P.E. groups have been travelling down to Leatherhead Leisure Centre to cycle with Matthew Wing, Wheels for All. We have the use of the Mole Barn, a large indoor area which means that we are not restricted by the weather conditions. The students and staff are improving their cycling skills and stamina as well as their ability to follow instructions and communicate with less familiar people in a new environment.
ELMWOOD NEWS

Elmwood class have been learning about different landforms in Geography. This has included making our own volcano which erupted with gusto, surprising students and staff alike, and learning about the lifestyle of Hawaii, a volcanic island.

In English we have been reading “Monkey Puzzle” and have enjoyed listening to the story and pretending to be different animals.

Whist we are delighted to welcome Katie Berry back from her maternity leave we are very sad to be saying “Goodbye” to Gemma. For nearly a year now she has taught Elmwood and we have really enjoyed having her as a member of the teaching staff. We wish her well and hope that she will stay in touch.

PINEWOOD NEWS

Pinewood are enjoying our new topic of ‘New Beginnings’ and have been planting lots of bulbs for the Marie Curie Foundation. We are sorry if we affected the weather with our choice of story this half term – Noah’s Ark! Pinewood has been exploring hot and cold in Science and all agree we prefer warm objects!

We had a fantastic Chinese New Year celebration with a whole day’s worth of activities – many thanks to the great staff in our class who make everything so special and worthwhile.

A Note from Bren

In December’s Spotlight, I mentioned that we were setting up a mobile phone, so that you could phone me directly or send a text.

The number is now available! It is set down at the end of this note.

The best days to contact me are still Mondays and Tuesdays between 9.00am and 5.30pm, and Thursday and Friday mornings.

I look forward to hearing from you!

With my best wishes,

Bren
Bren Holton
Parent Support Advisor
bren.holton@woodlands.surrey.sch.uk
01372 377922
Mobile: 07718 401465
FOXES NEWS
Foxes class has been full of the sounds of farm animals this half term. As our topic has been “What is that?” and the children have been matching pictures to sounds. We have learned about the “Seven Days of Creation” in the Bible and made a display. In art we have explored abstract art, painting in the style of Kandinsky and Jackson Pollock.

Foxes enjoy lots of sensory activities!

BADGERS NEWS
It’s been another very busy term in Badgers class where we have been looking at the topic ‘Light and Dark’. We have had a wonderful time exploring lots of different light up objects in our new sensory wendy house and have thoroughly enjoyed our sensory stories this term ‘Night Monkey, Day Monkey’ and ‘Whatever Next?’. In addition to our regular phonics and ‘musical maths’ sessions the class have particularly enjoyed our weekly resonance board sessions where we have begun to use them to retell some of our favourite stories!

ASHWOOD NEWS
Ashwood students have been working on an environmental recycling project this half term which has involved making and filling bird feeders and sorting and recycling household items.

Joe has started his work experience in Smiths with Employability and is very thorough when tidying and restocking shelves. Some of the students are also really working well with our new music therapist who joins them on a Friday lunch time for half an hour of musical expression. Music is very popular in class too where students play and explore rhythm using keyboard and drums. Students are practising their switch work using the SMART platform and participating in a sensory story about Treasure Island.

THANK YOU FOR THE SCOOTERS AND HELMETS
Children in the Lower School were delighted when Patricia Allardyce from the Inner Wheel came to assembly to present scooters and helmets they had bought for the school. The money was raised on a members’ picnic back in the summer.
SKI TRIP TO ITALY

Six pupils and five staff from Woodlands joined the Ski Party from Surrey’s special Schools this year. Prior to the trip all were involved in serious fund raising which was essential to be able to fund the level of staffing required. A sponsored cycle ride from London to Paris by Sheila and Zara ensured that the fund had good start, parents held a raffle and a supper at the Massala in Cobham, staff baked and sold cakes and parents sent in pennies to cover the parachute! Zara and Helen ran “ski club” one lunch time each week so that the students could practise wearing the boots, helmets, goggles and gloves essential for their safety.

The group left Chertsey in 4 coaches on Saturday lunch time and arrived in Prato Nevoso 23 hours later! This is now a streamlined operation as it has run for a number of years; regular stops are carefully planned. At the resort pupils are divided into groups according to experience so that they meet and work with new friends. The ski instructors are now experienced in working with our pupils and there is a regular team of organisers and support staff from within Surrey deployed to tasks which ensure that everything runs smoothly.

It is a wonderful experience for all involved and we are grateful to Zara and her team who give up their time to attend meetings and training prior to the event and are on duty 24/7 for the nine days, including two weekends of the trip. A big thank you to Helen Chandler too who volunteered to support the group, making it easier for Woodlands to provide the level of staffing required.

The staff were full of praise for the achievements of the pupils throughout the week. For some it was the longest that they had been away from home as well as their first time ski-ing.

A selection of photos below record the event:

Outside the Hotel