

## Message from the Headteacher:



### Thought of the Week

*I can set myself a target.*

As we begin a new term and welcome the New Year, there is a strong sense of purpose across the school. The start of January brings a valuable opportunity to reset, refocus and approach the term ahead with renewed energy. Our thought for the week, *"I can set myself a target,"* encourages many of our pupils and the staff that support them to think carefully about what each pupil can achieve.

Setting targets helps pupils to develop resilience, motivation and confidence. Whether these goals relate to learning, friendships or wellbeing, having a clear aim gives direction and meaning to each school day. As the term progresses, pupils will be supported to celebrate successes and learn from challenges along the way.

## New Year's Resolutions for Kids



We are looking forward to the many opportunities the New Year will bring, including new learning experiences, events and chances for our pupils to shine. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to ensure a purposeful and positive start to the term for everyone.

### Foxes Class News:

Foxes have had a fantastic start back to school after the Christmas holidays.

Our new theme this term is Animals and Habitats, and our learning is inspired by the story *"The Nature Trail"* by Benjamin Zephaniah. Based on the story we are exploring the natural world and the animals that live within it.



During our Attention Autism sessions, we are using animal toys and activities to develop attention, listening, and engagement skills. In Maths, the children are enjoying sorting animals by colour and pattern, helping to build early classification and problem-solving skills. In our Sensology sessions we explore a sensory trail round the zoo, using our senses to experience different textures, sounds, and sights from the zoo environment.



Throughout the day, self and mutual regulation is a very important skill we are all developing. The children are beginning to identify and recognise self regulation toys and activities that help them to feel regulated and ready to learn. We are encouraging independence by using communication aids placed around the classroom, enabling children to request self-regulation resources and make choices that support their individual needs.



We are very proud of how the Foxes have settled back into school routines and look forward to a fun and engaging term ahead.



### Pembroke Class News:

This spring term our topic is animals and habitats. In our first week back in 2026, Pembroke class have started to read our topic book 'What Am I?'. As we listen to each page, we used tactile elements and auditory cues to bring the story to life.



“Well, I know I am not a Rhino, because my skin’s not wrinkly”.





“And I know I’m not a pig because I don’t go oink”.



Rosaleen is holding and feeling her leaves.



“I’m definitely not a fish because I don’t have scales ...”



Olivia is seen as she accepts hand under hand support to make a pile of leaves from her one trunk slice.



“There’s no way I’m a giraffe because I don’t have a long neck”.



Mahfuj is sorting leaves and pinecones as he picks up just the cones.



Free Parent/Carer Support Session



## Sensory Breaks

Led by Lucy Martensz, Occupational Therapist

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January

10 am - 12 pm

Castle School – Fields Site

Please sign up to register your place on this free course:

<https://forms.office.com/e/12vbyp3Msx>



## Financial Support for Families

Have your circumstances changed recently?

Have you checked if your child might be eligible for Free School Meals?

Your child will get free school meals if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit - but no element of Working Tax Credit - and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) that does not exceed £16,190
- If you are supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work less hours per week
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (as from 1 April 2018)

Families who are currently paying for school meals will save around £450 a year for each primary school child if they are entitled to free school meals.

When your child is registered for free school meals, if your child is in Reception to Year 11, the school will also receive Pupil Premium, which is extra money to support children from families on lower incomes.

If your child is in receipt of universal infant free school meals (where your child is in Reception,



Year 1 or Year 2), we still recommend you apply if you believe you may be eligible for free school meals, because the protection will continue beyond Year 2 and the school will receive Pupil Premium funding to support your child's education.

You can apply for free school meals online at: <https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Apply for Education Welfare Benefits>

Please get in touch if you need help making an online application.

## Term Dates 2025-26

Autumn Term 2025	
Training Day	1 September*
Term Starts	2 September
Half Term	27 - 31 October
Training Day	3 November*
Term Ends	19 December
Spring Term 2026	
Term Starts	5 January
Half Term	16 - 20 February
Term Ends	26 March
Training Day	27 March*
Summer Term 2026	
Training Day	13 April*
Term Starts	14 April
Bank Holiday	4 May
Half Term	25 - 29 May
Training Day	3 July*
Term Ends	20 July
*School will be closed to pupils on Training Days	