



CASTLE NEWS

Friday 11 September 2026 V22 No.2

www.castleschool.info

Our thought of the week is:

'New Beginnings'

Message from the Headteacher



Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher's Message

It has been lovely to complete our first full week back and to see pupils settling into their new classes, routines and learning. There has been a really positive atmosphere across school, and I would like to thank families for helping us get the new year off to such a good start.

Thought of the Week

I know the people in my class

Theme of the Week

New Beginnings

As we continue to settle into the new school year, our focus is on helping pupils get to know the people around them, build relationships and feel secure in their new routines. These early weeks are an important time for developing confidence, belonging and familiarity, and we will continue to support pupils to make positive connections with their classmates and staff.

Free School Meals

I also wanted to highlight some changes around Free School Meals (FSM) and eligibility. From September 2026, eligibility has been widened so that children in households receiving Universal Credit can qualify for a free school meal regardless of household income.

This means that some families who were not previously eligible may now be able to claim. Our Family Support Workers will be looking at this carefully and will be in touch where we think a child may now be entitled, so please do speak with the team if they contact you and they will be happy to support you with the application process.

Our new Little Free Library

Those of you that have been to the Courtney Way site this week may also have spotted a rather special new addition at the front of school — our new Little Free Library!

The library was built for us by Wolfson College, Cambridge, as part of the *Making Cambridge 'Reading Rich'* campaign. The project aims to introduce 50 new Little Free Libraries across Cambridgeshire as part of the National Year of Reading 2026, helping more children, families and communities to enjoy reading for pleasure.

We are especially proud that Castle's is the first of the 50 pledged libraries to be built.

Students from Churchill Class will act as stewards for the library, helping to look after it and make sure it remains stocked.

The idea is very simple: there will be books for pupils and families to take home and enjoy. You can borrow a book and bring it back, swap it for another, or donate good-quality books you no longer need for somebody else to enjoy.

The motto says it perfectly:

Read, Love, Share.

We hope the library becomes a well-used part of our school community and encourages even more reading at home. We have included some further information about the [Making Cambridge 'Reading Rich'](#) project with this week's newsletter.

Have a lovely weekend.

Charlotte Whysall
Headteacher



Corfe Class News

Corfe Class have continued to become familiar with their routines, get to know each other, and build positive social relationships.

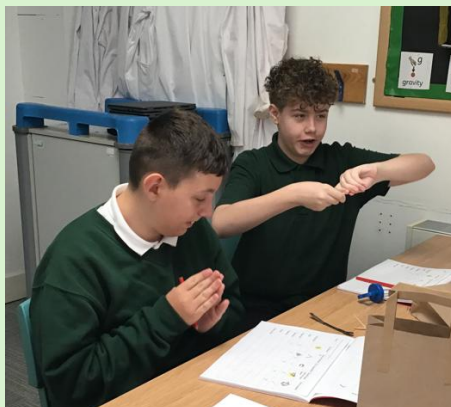
In English and Reading, we have enjoyed exploring the book *Oliver Twist*. We have shown some fantastic recall of key events within the text so far. In Reading, we have focused on using expression, maintaining a good pace, recognising and responding to punctuation, and using skimming and scanning to retrieve key details from the text. In our English lessons, we have learnt some tricky vocabulary and begun to focus on our spellings as a class, based on feedback from our reflective weekly diaries. We have enjoyed deconstructing our text and learning to spell compound words and words with prefixes.

In Maths, we have been working towards building a secure understanding of place value and number sense. During our Mastering Number sessions, we have built upon our knowledge of odd and even numbers and extended our knowledge of doubles.

In Science, we demonstrated great curiosity and pride in learning about elements and metals within the periodic table.

In PSHE, we learnt about the physical and mental health benefits of exercise. We enjoyed discussing these benefits before working together in pairs to sort them into physical and mental health benefits.

In Art, we enjoyed learning about landscapes, observing images of different landscapes and linking these to our feelings.



Badgers Class News

We are thrilled to welcome all of Badgers back after the summer holidays! It has been wonderful to see everyone settling into our new class routines, and we have already been very busy with lots of learning.

We have been getting hands-on with an immersive and fun sensory story based on our class book, '*The Listening Walk*' by Paul Showers. We have been developing our communication skills by using our communication boards to identify people and objects, as well as practising how to describe them.

During our PSHE lessons, we have been learning about how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through lots of practical activities. We have been learning about the importance of thoroughly washing our hands, cleaning our teeth and making healthy choices as part of a balanced diet.

We have also had lots of fun in our Science lessons, where we have been creating dens and exploring the differences between light and dark. The pupils have really enjoyed getting involved, exploring their environment and developing their understanding through exciting activities.



General News

Sign & Chat dates



Free Parent/Carer Support Session



Sign and Chat

Come and learn and practice Makaton signs and visuals to use at home with your child.

Led by Meriel Charlton, Specialist Teacher at Castle School

Foundation and Advanced Learners Welcome!

Accredited and non-accredited routes available.

All sessions are 10:00 – 11:00 am at the Castle School Main Site

Foundation session dates:	Advanced session dates:
Thursday 26th November 2026 Thursday 11th March 2027 Thursday 24th June 2027	Thursday 1st October 2026 Thursday 4th February 2027 Thursday 13th May 2027
Level 1 Makaton Accreditation available for those that complete all 3 Foundation sessions only. Otherwise, it is not necessary to attend all sessions.	Level 2 Makaton Accreditation available for those that complete all 3 Advanced sessions only. Otherwise, it is not necessary to attend all sessions.

Please note: Foundation sessions are suitable for beginners or those with very little Makaton signing knowledge. Advanced sessions are suitable for those who completed Makaton Level 1 last year or have good Makaton signing knowledge.

Please sign up to register your free place on sessions:

[Sign and Chat - Come learn Makaton signs and visuals you can use at home with your child. – Fill out form](#)



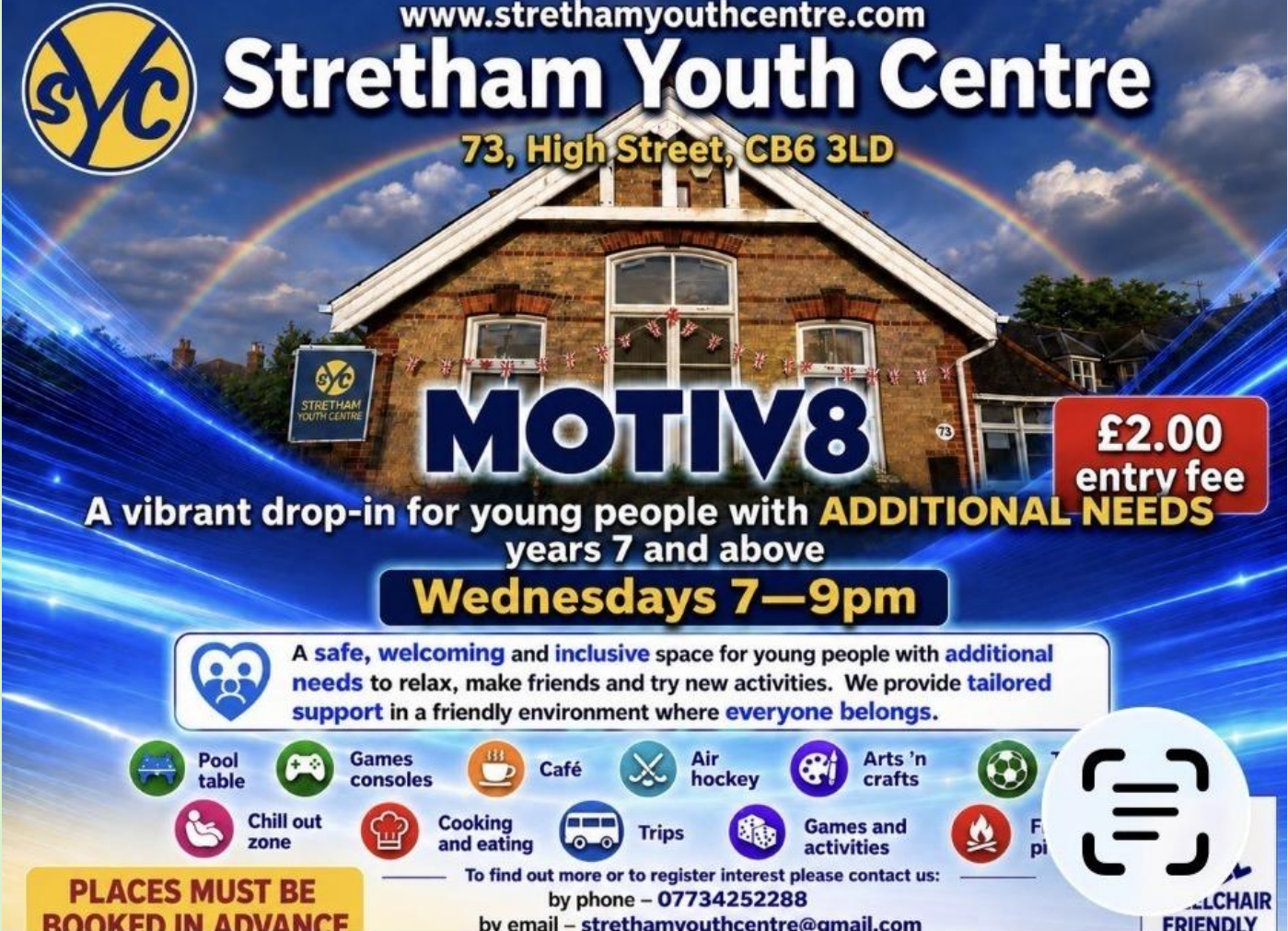
Stretham Youth Centre
for young people with additional needs

www.strethamyouthcentre.com



Stretham Youth Centre

73, High Street, CB6 3LD



MOTIV8

A vibrant drop-in for young people with **ADDITIONAL NEEDS**
years 7 and above

£2.00
entry fee

Wednesdays 7—9pm

 A safe, welcoming and inclusive space for young people with additional needs to relax, make friends and try new activities. We provide tailored support in a friendly environment where everyone belongs.

 Pool table	 Games consoles	 Café	 Air hockey	 Arts 'n crafts	
 Chill out zone	 Cooking and eating	 Trips	 Games and activities		

PLACES MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE

To find out more or to register interest please contact us:
by phone – 07734252288
by email – strethamyouthcentre@gmail.com

WHEELCHAIR FRIENDLY

Useful Information

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

If you have a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing, please contact:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

safeguarding@castle.cambs.sch.uk

01223 442400

Family Support

Our Family Support Team is here to help with:

- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Emotional wellbeing
- Support at home

familysupport@castle.cambs.sch.uk

✉ Contact Us

Have a question? We're here to help:

office@castle.cambs.sch.uk

01223 442400

Term Dates 2026-27

Autumn Term 2026	
Training Day*	Tuesday 1 September*
Term Starts	Wednesday 2 September
Half Term	Monday 26 – Friday 30 October
Training Day*	Monday 2 November*
Term Continues	Tuesday 3 November
Last Day of Term	Friday 18 December
Spring Term 2027	
Term Starts	Monday 4 January
Half Term	Monday 15 – Friday 19 February
Term Continues	Monday 22 February
Term Ends	Thursday 25 March
Summer Term 2027	
Training Days*	Monday 12 and Tuesday 13 April*
Term Starts	Wednesday 14 April

Bank Holiday	Monday 3 May
Half Term	Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June
Term Continues	Monday 7 June
Training Day*	Friday 2 July*
Term Ends	Wednesday 21 July
*School will be closed to pupils on Training Days	