Castle News

Together We Learn

Friday 23rd October 2026 V22 No.8

www.castleschool.info

Our thought of the week is:

'Friendship, Kindness and Belonging'

Message from the Headteacher



Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher's Update

As we reach the end of another busy half term, I would like to thank all our pupils, families and staff for their hard work and support over the past few weeks. We were treated to this beautiful rainbow over Castle this week, which felt like a lovely way to round off the half term!



We have another busy and exciting half term ahead, particularly as we begin looking towards Christmas. Dates for our Christmas events and activities will be shared with families shortly after the break, giving everyone plenty of time to get them into their diaries. We are also adding some exciting new elements to our festive fun linked to enterprise - 'Elf'rigdes' will be coming to Castle!

A reminder that Monday 2nd November is an INSET day, so we look forward to welcoming pupils back on Tuesday 3rd November.

Can you help?

Our wonderful site team, Mike and Andy, are particularly busy at the moment, and we have a number of jobs around school that we would like to get completed, including some improvements to our shared spaces.

We are looking for a handyman/painter and decorator who might be able to help us with some of this work. We would love to support a local business, so if any of our parents or carers work in the trade, or know someone they would recommend, please email the school office (office@castle.cambs.sch.uk), marking your message for the attention of Mary V.

Thought of the Week

"*Small choices can make a big difference.*"

This Week at Castle

Black History Month – 1st–31st October

Throughout October, we have been recognising Black History Month, providing opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate the achievements, contributions and experiences of Black people, both past and present. These experiences help us develop our understanding of the world and celebrate the diversity of our school community.

Healthy Lifestyles

Our focus this week has been on healthy lifestyles, linked to our theme:
"I can make healthy choices."

At Castle, we know that healthy choices look different for different learners. Whether it is exploring new foods via touch and tase sessions, enjoying movement and physical activity, recognising when we need a rest, or learning ways to look after our emotional wellbeing, every step is important. We encourage families to celebrate those small steps at home too.

Safeguarding Over Half Term

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils remains a priority, including during the school holidays. If you have any safeguarding concerns over half term, please remember that support is still available. **If a child or young person is in immediate danger or there is an urgent risk of harm, please call 999.**

For non-urgent safeguarding concerns or matters you would like to bring to the school's attention, please email **safeguarding@castle.cambs.sch.uk**. This inbox will be monitored at least once daily throughout the break, although responses may not be immediate. If you are concerned about a child's safety and feel that support is needed before school reopens, you can also contact Children's Social Care through the Local Authority. Please do not wait for a response from school if you believe a child is at risk of harm.

We hope all our families have a safe half term.

Finally, I hope everyone has a lovely half-term break, whatever you have planned. Enjoy some time together, and we look forward to seeing everyone back in November, ready for all that the next half term will bring.

Charlotte
Headteacher

Darwin Class News

Darwin Class has had a busy and productive first half term, with lots of exciting opportunities to develop practical, employability and enterprise skills.

Sam has organised a fantastic opportunity for a company to visit the school and demonstrate a new piece of food technology equipment, valued at approximately £1,000, which will be generously donated to us for use in our lessons. Learners will have the opportunity to watch a company presentation and sales pitch, gaining valuable insight into how businesses promote and demonstrate their products. This is a great way to link practical learning with real-world business skills.





Work Experience at Wimpole Hall and The Raptor Foundation

Some of our students have been gaining valuable work experience at Wimpole Hall, where they have been involved in weeding and helping to create a path in the Walled Garden. Some have been working at the Raptor centre, cleaning some of the enclosure and feeding the birds. These hands-on activities provide excellent opportunities to develop teamwork, communication, problem-solving and practical work skills in a real working environment.





Enterprise Project

Our enterprise activities have been in full swing this half term as students work hard to produce items for sale. They have been designing and printing their own T-shirts and canvas items, as well as painting Warhammer figures. These projects encourage creativity, independence and attention to detail, while helping students understand the process of making products to sell as part of a business.





Well done to everyone in Darwin Class for their enthusiasm, creativity and hard work this half term! We look forward to building on these experiences after the half-term break.

Carisbrooke Class News

This half term, Carisbrooke Class has been learning about our theme, 'World of Work', through Art and Attention Autism Bucket sessions. We have been discovering a variety of careers, including bakers, police officers, nurses, news reporters and railway workers. Our focus story has been *All Through the Night* by Polly Faber, which introduces us to the many different jobs people do while the rest of the world is asleep. We have brought the story to life through a range of sensory resources and hands-on activities, giving the students opportunities to engage with the story in their own unique ways. The children have particularly enjoyed experiencing the variety of resources, art materials and creative techniques linked to our topic, making it a fun and engaging half term for everyone in Carisbrooke Class!



During Creativity, we used different types of transport to create a variety of marks on paper with paint, inspired by careers in the transport industry.



During our sensory story, we are all pretending to be news reporters.



During our sensory story, we practised looking after a baby, just like a midwife.



During Creativity, we created a realistic tree using leaves collected from outside, inspired by the career of horticulture.



During our sensory story, we were visited by our 'nurse', Ellie.



During Creativity, we created a tambourine inspired by the career of a musician.



After our sensory story, we sat at the table and wrote sentences about different careers using Colourful Semantics.



During our sensory story, we all became police officers.

School News

Free Parent/Carer Support Session at our Fields Site, Galfrid Road

Free Parent/Carer Support Session

Benefit Support for a Child/Young Adult with SEN

Led by Alice Hamilton, Citizens Advice

Wednesday 4th November

10 am - 12 pm

The Fields Site (Galfrid Road Cambridge, CB5 8ND)

Overview of session:

Come and find out what benefits your family may be entitled to.
Gain an awareness of how to access these benefits.
It is also an opportunity to ask any questions you may have linked to benefit support.

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

Benefit Support - Wednesday 4th November, 10am - 12pm, Fields Site, In Person Event – Fill out form



Relationships, Sex and Health Education – Parent Consultation
Thursday 5th November 2026 at our Fields Site

At Castle School, we are committed to providing high-quality, age and developmentally appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) that meets the individual needs of our pupils.

Following the updated Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance, effective from September 2026, we have reviewed our RSHE policy and curriculum to ensure our teaching remains inclusive, accessible and appropriate for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Our curriculum helps pupils develop positive relationships, understand personal boundaries, recognise risks, stay safe online and offline, and develop the skills needed for healthy, independent lives.

We warmly invite parents and carers to take part in our RSHE consultation on Thursday 5th November 2026 at our Fields site (Galfrid Road, CB5 8ND) at 12pm. This is an opportunity to review our updated policy, learn more about what is taught, view teaching resources, ask questions and share your views.

In line with DfE guidance, parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science, but may request withdrawal from sex education in accordance with statutory arrangements.

We value your feedback and look forward to working together to ensure our RSHE curriculum meets the needs of all our pupils. Please contact Sarah Norman if you have any queries.

Together We Learn – Castle School

Keeping in touch with former pupils

We track our former pupils for 3 years after they leave, we love hearing how they are getting on and offering support if needed. Here's an update on one of last July's leavers who continued education at Red 2 Green in Swaffham Burbeck:

'Now that he's settled in, he seems to absolutely love it! He still follows his usual routine of packing his bag of 30-ish CDs the night before, and then happily jumping into the taxi in the morning without any problems.

The feedback from Red2Green has been really positive. They tell us that Taylor is calm and happy during the day, takes part in group activities, and also knows when he needs a bit of space. They're really pleased with how well he's integrating into the setting so far.



And the best bit? When he gets home and we ask him how his day was, we get the usual enthusiastic "GOOOOOOD!" (complete with a 👍). So, all in all, things seem to be going to plan!

Of course, we miss Castle School and all the wonderful people who supported Taylor there. You were all so amazing with him, and we'll always be grateful for that. But time moves on, and it's looking very much as though the provision you helped to suggest and secure has turned out to be a really good fit for him. It's lovely to see him happy, settled and enjoying this next chapter.

Thank you again for everything you did to help Taylor get to this point. It really does mean a lot to us.'

General News

Mental Capacity Act Webinars for family carers

The Mental Capacity Act – Your rights / your loved ones right and professional responsibilities

Free informal webinars for anyone caring for a person aged 16 or over who cannot make some decisions for themselves

About the webinars

These are free online sessions for family carers or anyone caring for a person aged 16 or over who cannot make some decisions for themselves (either now or potentially in the future). If you are supporting someone who is soon to turn 16 you are also welcome to attend. The sessions will explain the Mental Capacity Act in clear, practical terms with a focus on what the law means in everyday situations and how it affects you and the person you care for.

The webinars are repeated throughout the year, so you can attend at a time that suits you. We are also planning some face-to-face sessions later in the year.

You will learn about

- What mental capacity is and how it is assessed
- How best interests decisions are made
- Using the Mental Capacity Act in day-to-day caring situations
- What you should expect from professionals
- How to challenge poor practice
- Legal options such as: Lasting Powers of Attorney, Deputies, Advance Decisions and Appointeeship
- what is meant by the legal term deprivation of liberty and what it means for you and your loved one.

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Dates and times and joining link

*Click ***'here'*** on the date that works for you to access the session.

- Wednesday, November 4th, 13.00 to 14.30, click **here** to join
- Tuesday, December 1st, 10.00 to 11.30, click **here** to join
- Thursday, January 14th, 10.00 to 11.30, click **here** to join
- Friday, February 12th, 10.00 to 11.30, click **here** to join
- Monday, March 8th, 13.00 to 14.30, click **here** to join
- Thursday, April 22nd, 10.00 to 11.30, click **here** to join
- Wednesday, May 19th, 13.30 to 15.00, click **here** to join
- Tuesday, June 1st, 10.00 to 11.30, click **here** to join

Cambridgeshire County Council

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

Events at Arbury Library
in October Half Term and late November

Bird Puppet Making, Thursday 29 October 11.30am

Make your own beautiful bird puppet using recycled and colourful materials. Inspired by British birds and birds that visit each year! Explore the flight paths of birds - and the journeys of people who make their homes in new places.

Recommended for Families with children 5+yrs.
Running time: 30minutes - 2 hours (stay as long as you like)
Tickets: Pay what you can (from £0)
Accessibility Information: Suitable for all abilities. Adults as well as children are welcome to make puppets.

Bird Puppet Making at Arbury Court Library event tickets from TicketSource



Hats Off! Concert, Saturday 28 November 3pm

Mambo Jambo's playful interactive show and concert for families. Songs, music, props, instruments, interaction, mayhem, AND HATS! Pete and Frankie play a fascinating array of musical instruments including sax, guitar, banjo, accordion, clarinet and spoons. Before the show there is a fun, accessible workshop with a carnival theme involving singing, basic percussion, body percussion, boomwhackers, raps/ chants. No music experience needed.

Recommended for Families with children 3-10yrs
Running time: 1 hour 30 minutes + interval (45 minutes each for workshop and show)
Tickets: £4.50 each / £17 Group Saver

Hats Off! Concert at Arbury Court Library event tickets from TicketSource



Saturday Gardening & Activities Club with 'Branching Out'

Branching Out is launching a Saturday Gardening & Activities Club for young people aged 16–25 with learning disabilities starting 14th November 2026.

The club offers gardening and crafts sessions in a safe, supportive setting.

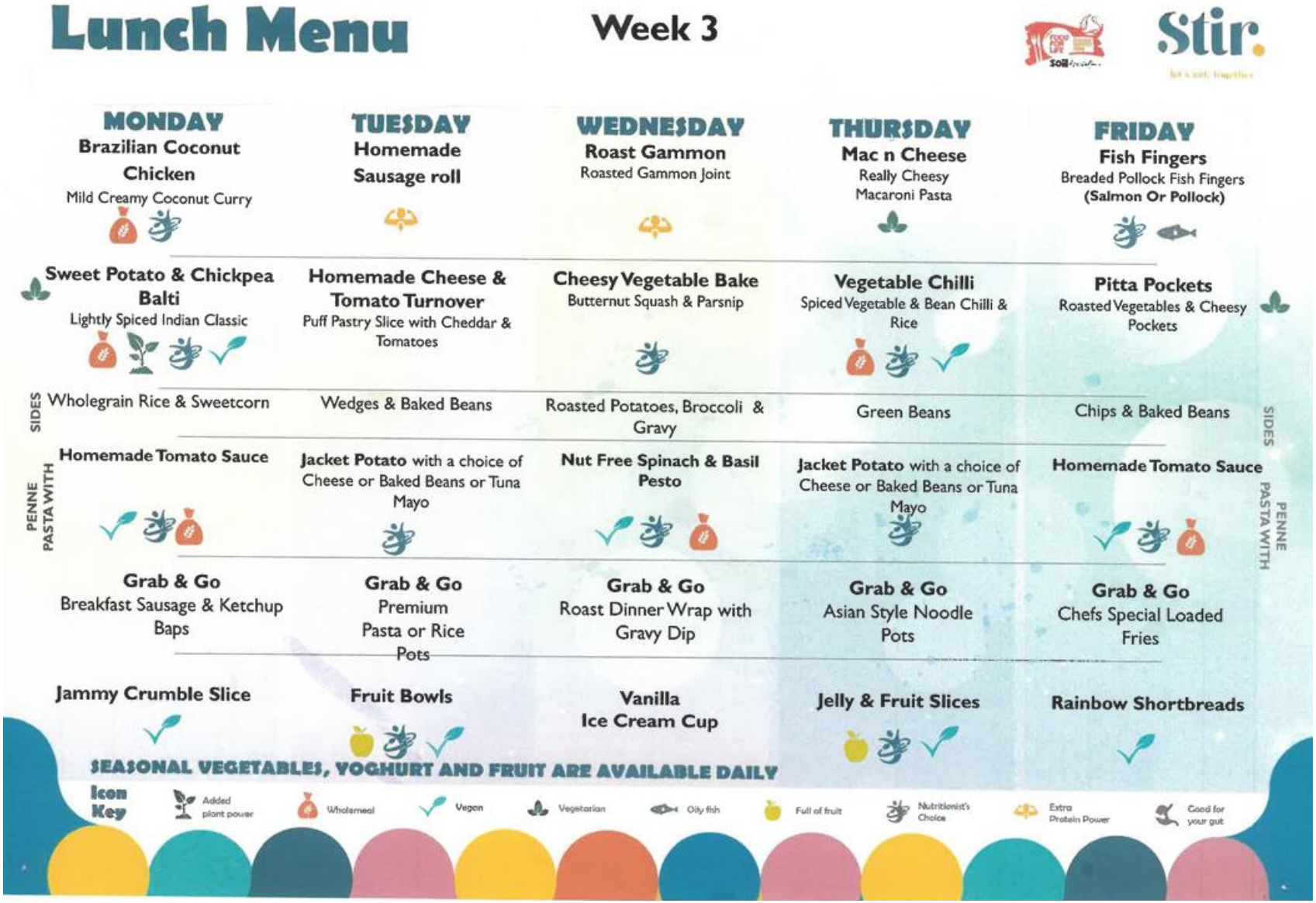
Please fill out our Referral Form and further information below.



Phoenix Milton's Christmas Fair
Sunday 29 November 2026



Lunch Menu (Week 3)
Tuesday 3 – Friday 6 November 2026



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	