

Houghton School Newsletter



Website: www.houghton.leics.sch.uk tel: 0116 241 2465 email: office@hhs.learnat.uk

Helping Children Flourish: Safe, Healthy and Confident

This newsletter highlights some of the ways in which we think about and support the *whole child*—not just academically, but socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically. Our approach includes **safeguarding, positive mental health, SEND support**, and ensuring every child feels valued, safe and ready to learn.

As a school, we continually reflect on how we can best support both pupils and families. Although there are constraints—such as time, budgets and physical space—we work hard to find creative and practical solutions. Our regular committees continue to play an important role in this, and we are always exploring ways to strengthen what we offer.

We are also focusing on expanding our extra-curricular opportunities. This work is still in its early stages, but we are pleased to share that several lunch time clubs and activities are already up and running:

Chess and Card Club for our older pupils

Reading buddies in Year 2

School Newsletter Team, led by a group of enthusiastic Year 6 pupils

Friday Lunchtime Skipping Club – each class will take part on a rolling three-week rota

Choir for KS2

The after-school Cooking Club has been very successful, and we have considered how we can provide opportunities for younger pupils. Recently, **Year 1 and Year 2 enjoyed a taster session of Lazer Tag**, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone—especially Mrs Wynne!

Being part of a club offers children a wide range of benefits. It helps them build confidence, develop social skills and make new friendships across different year groups. Clubs support positive mental health by giving pupils a sense of belonging and an enjoyable break from the school day. They also encourage independence, broaden children's experiences and allow them to explore new interests and talents. Most importantly, clubs help pupils feel more connected to school life, contributing to their overall wellbeing and development as whole, confident learners. We look forward to continuing this journey together, supporting every child to thrive in all aspects of their school life.

Warm regards
Ali Woollerson
Headteacher




LEARN
ACADEMIES TRUST

Updates.....

Miss Hill will be leaving us after half term to start her maternity leave. We are very excited for her as she prepares to welcome baby number two, and we will keep you updated with her news. Her final day in Foundation Stage will be **Tuesday 10th February**. During her absence, **Mrs Pausey** has kindly agreed to teach full-time in Foundation Stage. This is wonderful news for the children, staff and families, and ensures strong continuity for the class.

As well as her teaching role, Miss Hill is also our SENDCo. She will be returning for a few days after half term to focus on key SEND priorities and to ensure a smooth and well-planned handover to our new SENDCo, **Mel Wrightam**.

Parents of SEND pupils are warmly invited to meet Mrs Wrightam at our **SEND Coffee Morning on Wednesday 11th February (9.00–10.00am)**. A flyer should already be in your child's book bag. Please also complete the link below so that we know how many chairs to set out.

[SEND COFFEE/TEA MORNING @9AM ON WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY – Fill in form](#)

During the session, we will also be working with parents to shape **an action plan** for how we can continue to strengthen support for our SEND families as part of our work with the **PINS project**.



PARENTS' EVENINGS

Look out for the Online booking form for parents' evenings' that will be sent to you by the class teacher. Please book online before the deadline as any late bookings may be allocated a time and day by the teacher. Thank you for your support with this.



We are incredibly proud of our Year 2 pupils who have been taking part in swimming lessons last term. They have shown fantastic determination, confidence and resilience in the pool, with many making huge progress in a short space of time. It has been wonderful to see their enthusiasm each week—whether learning new strokes, improving their water safety skills or simply growing in confidence.



As part of our work to help pupils become confident and responsible digital learners, we have been exploring exciting and creative ways to use artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom. AI is becoming a familiar tool for children, and we want to ensure they understand both its possibilities and its risks.

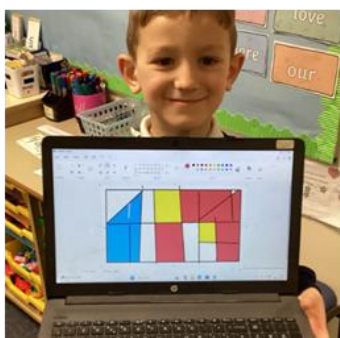
Across the school, teachers have been using AI to support lessons in fun and engaging ways. In English, AI has helped to generate high-quality model texts that pupils can study and learn from. In other subjects, children have used AI tools to support research, gather background knowledge and explore topics in greater depth. One of the children's favourite activities has been using AI to create images based on their own descriptive writing—bringing their ideas to life and helping them visualise the scenes they have imagined.

Alongside this creative use of technology, we are also helping pupils think carefully about how to use AI safely and responsibly. Our online-safety committee has recently been working on posters showing the pros and cons of AI, including how it can help with learning but also why it's important to check information, protect personal data and use AI tools thoughtfully.

Next week, we will be holding a whole-school assembly linked to National Online Safety Week, focusing on the theme of safe AI use. This will help all pupils understand how to enjoy AI's benefits while staying safe online.

Together, we are supporting our children to become informed, responsible digital citizens.

Here is some more information for parents and carers [Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)



Safer Internet Day 2026 | **Tuesday 10 February**

Coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre

saferinternetday.org.uk



Safeguarding at Houghton-on-the-Hill

At Houghton-on-the-Hill CE Primary School, keeping every child safe is our highest priority. All staff receive annual safeguarding training, and this is strengthened through weekly updates that share key messages, learning and reminders to ensure our practice stays current and robust.

As well as our internal safeguarding systems, we also work closely with our **Safeguarding Link Governor**, who meets with the school regularly to check compliance, including reviewing policies, training records and anonymised case studies. Findings from these meetings are reported back to the full governing body to ensure strong oversight. We regularly remind children that if they ever feel worried or unsafe, they know exactly who they can talk to.

Safeguarding is strongest when we work in partnership. If you or your child ever have any worries, however small, please get in touch.



Operation Encompass – Supporting Our Pupils

Houghton on the Hill is an **Operation Encompass school**, a national initiative that helps schools provide timely support to children who may have been affected by domestic abuse. This means that, when the police attend an incident of domestic abuse where children are present or linked to the household, they will inform a trained member of the school's safeguarding team before the next school day i.e. Mrs Woollerson and Mrs Pickford (DSLS- Designated Safeguarding Leads).

This early sharing of information allows us to offer support and care to children who may be feeling worried or unsettled. Only key safeguarding staff receive this information, and it is handled with the highest level of confidentiality.

If you would like to know more about Operation Encompass, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead or visit www.operationencompass.org. All information is treated with confidence.

Dates for the Diary

Class Assemblies 2026

Year 2: Friday 13th February
Year 4: Friday 6th March
Year 1: Friday 20th March
Year 5: Friday 24th April
Year 3: Friday 8th May

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

As always, attendance features regularly in our newsletters, but this month we are placing a particular focus on *punctuality*. The school gates close at **8:45am** and if you arrive after this time, you will need to sign in at the office, and your child will receive a late mark. Arrivals that are **30 minutes or more after this** are recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

In last month's newsletter, I shared some Autumn Term data showing that **74 children** had received at least one late mark. I have now reviewed the data for the start of the Spring Term. Since returning in January, we have recorded **100 late marks (52 pupils)**. On closer analysis, **10 pupils** have been late for **10% or more** of the school days in January alone.

I will continue to monitor punctuality closely and will contact families where lateness remains a concern. Ensuring a prompt start to the day makes a significant difference to children's readiness for learning, so thank you for your support in helping your children arrive on time. If lateness relates to your child, we will also be talking to you about this at the next parents' evenings as sometimes support for the pupil can help with this.

Monday 9th February

Year 5 trip to the Space Centre

Wednesday 11th February

9- 10 am
SEND Coffee Morning

Monday 15th- Friday 20th February

Half term Holiday

Thursday 5th March

10-11am

Parent Forum for the PINs project
All families welcome

Have a say in improving support for children with additional needs.

Please note change of date

Monday 2nd and Wednesday 4th March

3.30pm -6.30pm
Parent meetings

Wednesday 4th March

Class Photos

wc 9th March

Bikeability week for Year 5 pupils

Thursday 26th March

9.15am
Easter Service

Thursday 26th March

3.15pm
Easter Egg Hunt- details to follow

Easter Holidays

Monday 30th March- Friday 10th April

Remember to check our school website for term dates
[Houghton-on-the-Hill Primary School - Term Dates](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2026



Funded by
UK Government

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through to adulthood.

Children's mental health is shaped by many different factors, including:

Biological: Genetics, brain development, physical health, and how well they sleep all play a part.

Psychological: Their self-esteem, how they cope with challenges, and any experiences of trauma or loss can affect how they feel and behave.

Family & social: Parenting style, family conflict, friendships, and bullying all have a big influence.

Environmental: School stress, money problems, discrimination, social media, and how easy it is to get help also make a difference.

Strong relationships, feeling safe, having healthy routines, and getting help early can really support children's mental wellbeing.



DID YOU KNOW?



Research in 2023 found that 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8-25 had a probable mental health disorder. That's around 6 children in every class!

Source: NHS

Signs of poor mental health

Signs of poor mental health in children and young people will vary, but here are some common signs to look out for.

Emotional: Often sad, anxious, or irritable. Mood swings or low self-esteem. Feeling hopeless or guilty.

Behavioural: Withdrawing from friends or family. Losing interest in usual activities. Behaviour changes, aggression, or self-harm.

Physical: Trouble sleeping or eating. Frequent headaches, stomach aches, or tiredness.

School & social: Drop in performance in school or avoiding school. Difficulty concentrating or making friends.

Mental Health Support services

There are a number of services and charities that can offer advice and support. Click on the logos to head straight to their websites!



YOUNGmINDS

BARNARD'S

Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.

MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

Place 2Be

NHS

mind

5 WAYS TO WELLBEING

tellmi

ChatHealth
Text a public health nurse (school nurse) for confidential advice and support
07520 615 382
or start a chat at:
chathealth.nhs.uk



Place2Be's
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK
9-15 FEB 2026

KEY DATES

- Time to Talk Day - 6th February
- Children's Mental Health Week - 9th - 15 Feb
- National Apprentice Week - 9-15th Feb
- Safer Internet Day - 10th February
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week - 24th February to 2nd March

Children's Mental Health week will take place from 9-15th February and the theme this year is **This is My Place**. The theme explores the vital role of belonging. A sense of belonging - whether in our families, schools, peer groups, or wider communities - is a fundamental human need. It helps us feel secure, supported, and ready to learn and grow.

When children feel they belong, they are more likely to have positive mental health, build healthy relationships, and believe in their ability to make a difference.

Source: Place2Be

Find out more [here](#)

Beat has lots of resources help you learn more about eating disorders and how to seek help. Find out more [here](#)



LET'S GET SOCIAL!



Health | Well-being | School Sport | PE | Physical Activity
Supporting South Lakelandshire Schools to provide opportunities for all young people



Health | Well-being | School Sport | PE | Physical Activity
Supporting South Leicestershire Schools to provide opportunities for all young people

South Leicestershire Community Board

Winter Support

Find Winter support information for your area here

ONE, Chat and connect

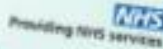
Are you a parent or carer of a young person aged 0-19?

Come along to our family wellbeing advice and drop in session. A safe space to chat.

A time for family wellbeing workers to look at any services that may be helpful to you and your family. Children welcome.

Wigton Magna Children and family wellbeing centre
Long Street, Wigton, LE18 2AH
3PM - 2:30PM

Most pharmacies can help you with **seven common conditions** without needing a GP appointment



- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache (children)
- Infected insect bite
- Impetigo
- Shingles
- Urinary tract infection (women)

Ask your pharmacy for more information about this free* NHS service

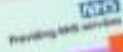
Visit your Pharmacy First!



Speakout Wellbeing resources



Most pharmacies can help you with **seven common conditions** without needing a GP appointment



Speak to your pharmacist if you suspect you have
Earache
(Children aged 1 to 17 years)

Visit your Pharmacy First!

