



# Strathmore Grapevine



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# Message from Sarah Hurtado

## Acting Headteacher

My reflections on the most incredible Autumn term.

I have loved sending weekly communication with our families this term via our Family Newsletter and this is an opportunity to spread the word about Strathmore to those further afield in our community. What a term it has been. There have been changes at Strathmore as well as in the wider world and it is only really when we stop and look back at the hurdles we have jumped over that we truly see what has been accomplished. Hopefully all our school community will have a chance to stop and reflect and only then the real picture will be uncovered.

I have learnt and am still learning something new every day in my new role as Acting Head and this is what continues to drive my passion to lead our exceptional school. In my reflections, there is an overwhelming pride of what those around me have achieved and one thing I do know to be true, is that only together can we drive our school forwards. We are an amazing collective community, and this has been highlighted over and over this term through the daily life of Strathmore.

Our learners – they are the reason we are all here and they are individually and uniquely the most wonderful people whom we are proud to teach. Their development is our priority, both academically, socially and emotionally. Over the last few weeks, we have had a range of winter events that have showcased their talents and next term we have the majority of our Annual Review meetings, and this is another time to celebrate their achievements. We cannot wait to see you in person or virtually – please make a note of the date of your child's review.

Our families – we can only support your children with the continuous collaborative relationships that you develop with us. Thank you for joining us at the recent winter concerts, Stay and Play sessions and parent/carer and teacher consultations. Next year we will be sending out information about our family activities via Friends of Strathmore School (FOSS) which includes an International Evening and our annual summer BBQ. Please support us and take an active role in FOSS events.

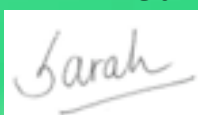
Email [FOSS@strathmore.org.uk](mailto:FOSS@strathmore.org.uk) if you are interested in helping with events.

Our staff – I know that in this edition of The Grapevine, there is a 'Shout out' to our staff and I want to reiterate this in my 'Headspace.' It is a difficult time for recruitment and retention in the UK and we are focusing on this in our school and Trust priorities. However, the large team of staff that we do have at our 4 campuses are dedicated and hardworking and I am immensely fortunate to be part of their team. I want to personally thank all of the staff at the Darell, Russell, Grey Court and SRR Campuses, both those who work directly and indirectly with the children.

Our community – this term, we have continued to be supported by those in our community and our circle of influence has grown. Our links with our 4 co-located schools have flourished, our extracurricular provision has developed providing after school and weekend PE activities, and we have had the most amazing support from The Victoria Foundation who have raised enough money to part fund another minibus.

On the next pages I have put some photos of the recent winter events at our 4 campuses which highlight the wonderful work that has taken place. I hope you enjoy them.

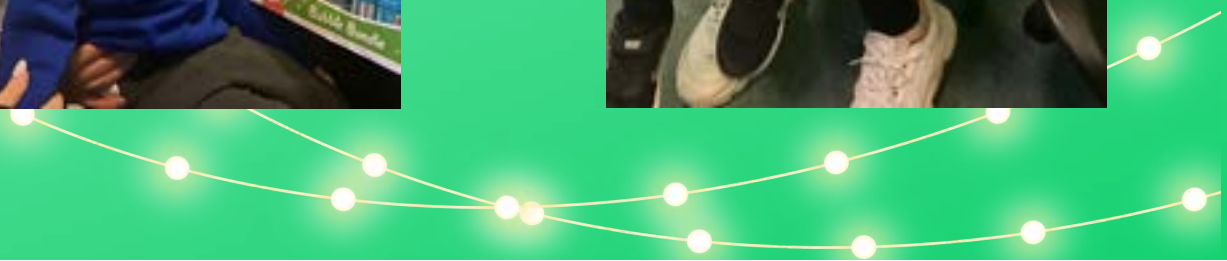
On behalf of the staff and governors at Strathmore, we hope you have a very happy holiday, and we look forward to seeing you all in 2023.

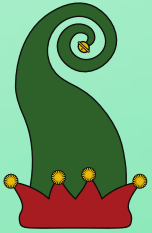




## ELF NEWS

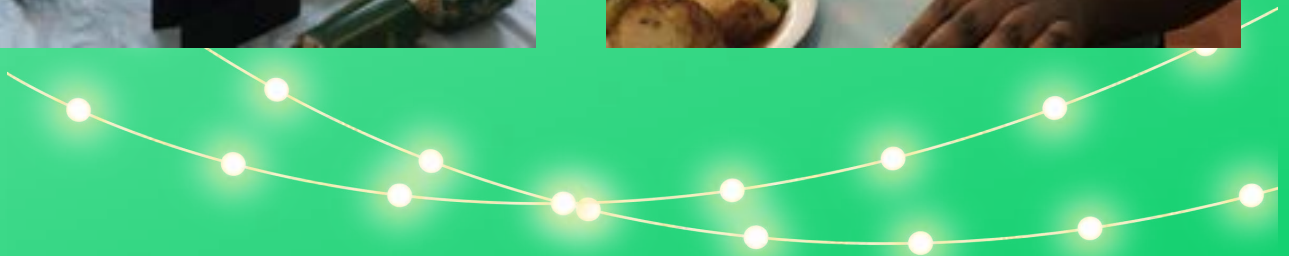
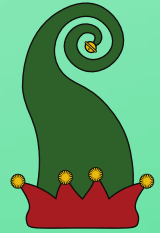
This year the Elf visited all our campuses  
(with support from SRR School and Grey Court School  
Year 10 students)

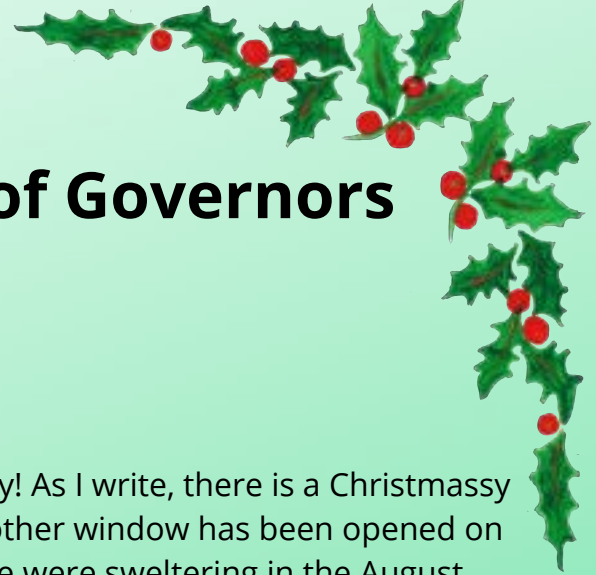




### FESTIVE FUN

We all enjoyed festive activities and food this December.





# Message from the Chair of Governors

By John Watkin

Dear all,

It is nearly time to break up for the Christmas holiday. Already! As I write, there is a Christmassy frost on the ground outside, the decorations are up, and another window has been opened on the advent calendar. But it feels like only yesterday that we were sweltering in the August heatwave! But a lot has happened in this fast-moving term.

The local governing body (LGB) has its full complement of 12 members again, with Dev Desai joining us as a Parent Governor. He has made a flying start and is most welcome. I would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank the whole board. As you will know, all members are volunteers who give up their precious time to support and oversee the work of our fantastic school with diligence, intelligence and great humour. Thank you so much Alex, Amy, Dev, Jane, Laura, Marc, Minta, Mitch, Rebecca, Sarah and Tom! We have also welcomed this term, Julie Adams, AAT's new governance professional. Julie has done a great job of keeping us all on our toes and ensuring that we do things properly. Thank you, Julie!

I am sure you will all agree that Sarah has made a great start at the helm. Believe me, hers is not an easy job! We on the LGB have been hugely impressed with her and her team's thorough and professional work this term. In fact, I would go as far as to say that, thanks to their and Ivan's hard work, an outstanding Ofsted judgement is now very likely. So, on behalf of the LGB, thank you Sarah, Lauren, Laura, Adriana and Ivan!

This term has seen the start of our fourth campus. I had the pleasure of visiting Astra class at Darell School a few days ago. The team there has worked incredibly hard to have things up and running for the children (despite inevitable teething problems with furniture!) and have made a terrific start. So, again from us all, thank you Amy, Rachele, Sadie and Nicky!

We are, of course, grateful to all teachers, support staff and administrators at Strathmore. We never cease to be amazed by your skill, patience, commitment, friendliness and good humour.  
Thank you all!

And finally, none of the above would mean anything without you, our parents, carers and, most important of all, the children themselves. There is always a purposeful, collaborative and positive atmosphere at Strathmore and much of the credit for that is yours. Thank you one and all!

We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year and look forward to seeing you all again in 2023.

With best wishes, John Watkin



# Message from Laura Wrigglesworth

## Assistant Head for Primary

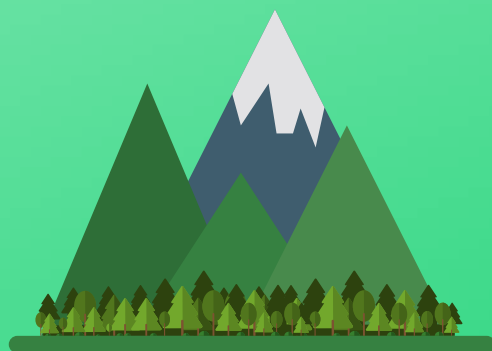
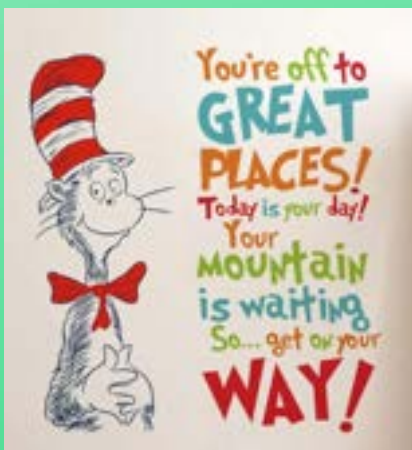
My first term at Strathmore has flown by and it's been jam packed full of memorable experiences.

I have really enjoyed spending time in the classes and seeing such a fantastic variety of engaging learning opportunities; 'Attention Autism' sessions with light up toys and shaving foam, 'What's in the Bag?' phonics lessons with guess the animal sound, sensory stories, OT circuits, cooking sessions, not to mention library trips, horse-riding and swimming lessons! I am lucky enough to be at The Russell and St Richard Reynolds campuses when the Music Teachers and Therapist are there, and it is clear how much the learners love the opportunity to sing and play with instruments. The Winter performances this year have highlighted the hard work all the staff and children put in and has been one of my highlights so far.

I have loved getting to know the learners, parents and staff and want to thank you all for such a warm welcome!

I am not the only new starter at Strathmore as Nova, Astra and Delphini class have also welcomed new learners.

It has been wonderful to see how families and staff have worked together to share information and it is clear when I visit the classes, how well they understand the children and what trusting relationships they have formed with them. The children have all settled brilliantly into their new environments and I look forward to sharing in the many adventures that lie ahead for them.



I hope you all have a restful and healthy break and look forward to lots more highlights in 2023!

Enjoy the winter holidays,

Best wishes

Laura

# Message from Adriana Martyr

## Assistant Head for Secondary

The most rewarding experience this term has been working with all the secondary classes across Strathmore and seeing how the learners continue to grow in confidence and independence. I have also enjoyed talking to the families and continuing to work together to make the journey at Strathmore School the best it can be for their children. This year we welcomed Pascal, Adonai and Zaki, who made a successful transition to the Grey Court campus and have settled in extremely well.

We have had a few special events happening this term in the secondary classes:

- Trip to Thames Young Mariners at the start of the year, which was a success with the learners showing excellent transition skills and improved core strength when taking part in the canoeing activities!
- Arts Day in November with guest artist Gwen Ramsay from Orleans House Gallery who worked with the learners on garden crafts which will be displayed in the classrooms. In her own words: 'It was great to see the students again and I was so impressed by their focus and enthusiasm.'
- My life after School and College workshop led by Sue Robson, SEND transition advisor at RUILS where our Y12 to Y14 learners expressed their views and created 'Dream Bubbles', which they will bring to their annual reviews next year.
- Taster work experience opportunities, including: litter picking, gardening, minibus cleaning and Café Vanilla, led by Louise, Ruben and Luis. Thank you so much for your drive and passion to offer these opportunities to prepare the learners for the next stage in their lives. The secondary teams this year have shown excellent disposition to support each other and the learners' behaviour and wellbeing whilst using specialist strategies effectively to promote learning and progress. We are predicting excellent results by the end of this year's assessment cycle. Thanks to your tenacity and the hard work you put in everything you do.

Have a restful and reinvigorating holiday season and see you all after the New Year!

Adriana





# Message from Lauren Crew

## Acting Deputy Headteacher

Hello to our Newbies!



Wow! What a brilliant start to the year! As you know, every year we get new learners joining the Strathmore gang, and also new staff, so I wanted to create a corner in the Grapevine to say hello and make sure everyone knows who they are!

Firstly, we have 3 new teachers –  
**Ruben (Andromeda), Amy C (Phoenix) and Tom (Leo).**

We have lots of new support staff who have joined us on permanent contracts –  
**Hoi Yee (GC Playleader), Helen (Russell playleader), Shithara (Nova), Samira (Nova), Pearl (Phoenix), Samaia (Perseus), Olivia (Vega), Hazel (Vega), Vikki (Capella) and Nicky (Astra).**

We also have internal HLTA promotions that deserve a mention -  
**Ryan (Capella), Louis (Pegasus), Alexandra (Vega), Rachele (Astra) and Roy (Mira).**



Our new Assistant Headteacher – **Laura (Head of Primary).**

Welcome to our new learners in Delphini Nova, and Astra -  
**Charlie, Paulo, Ida and Alexander – Delphini**  
**Isabella, Gabriel, Leon and Charles – Nova**  
**Joshua, Rory, Alisa, Camilla and Leo – Astra**

We are increasing in numbers and growing in skills (both the staff and learners). It has been wonderful to see the new teams adapt and co-ordinate the new dynamics in their classes to benefit the learners and their progress. I am so proud to work in a school with such dedicated individuals at all levels, and thank you to the families who continue to communicate effectively with the classes and work as a team with us!

I think we can all agree that **Sarah** has had a brilliant start as **Acting Headteacher** and although learning her new role, has maintained high standards for learners and staff. Thank you for leading us with confidence and humility.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first half term as Acting Deputy Headteacher and getting used to being across all 4 campuses. Getting to know learners again that I used to teach back at 'old Strathmore' in Ham, who are now 18 (oh my goodness!!), has been truly wonderful and I feel very privileged to be able to connect with the fantastic learners and staff each week.

Have a wonderful Christmas, Hanukkah, Las Posadas, Kwanzaa, New Year or just spending some quality time with loved ones over the next two weeks.



Lauren





# Our amazing staff



By Lauren Crew, Acting Deputy Headteacher

We are sure coming to the Winter Concerts solidified your many comments from the parent survey about our amazing staff team and how well they support your children.

Our staff are an incredible group of practitioners who support the learners with their learning as well as independence and self-help skills. In order to be the best, we must ensure we have the most up-to-date training and refreshers of strategies from our therapy teams to embed in the classrooms effectively.

This term, we had an after-school inset led by our Occupational Therapy Team where we learnt about the benefits of using exercise balls and how these can be utilised to reduce arousal levels and heighten attention / engagement using different techniques. (As you can imagine the hall was filled with laughter whilst we were learning...!)

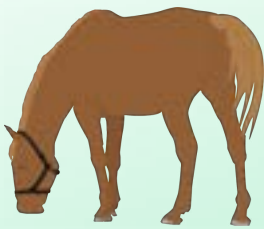




The Autumn term can feel challenging with new classes, days feeling shorter and trying to embed new routines, so it is important we come together as a staff team to reflect, bond and re-energise.

Thank you to our amazing staff!



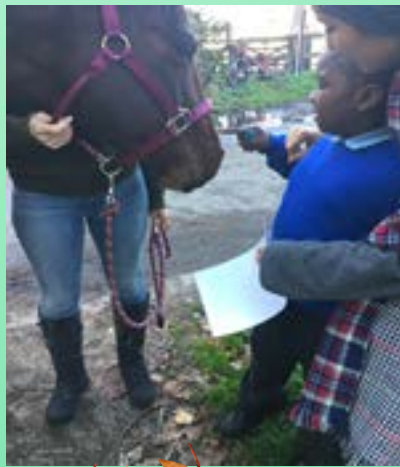


# Delphini class



This term in Delphini Class we have been going on a walk, in groups, outside the perimeter of school. We have all walked alongside our adult or held their hand and listened to their guidance to cross the roads safely.

During our walks we listened to the sounds from our environment and some of us used spoken word, or Aided Language Displays, to comment on what we heard. We are curious about the animals we see on our walks including dogs, horses and ponies. On our walks we are developing our gross motor skills and are working on our abilities to walk along a variety of surfaces including managing slopes and small steps.





# Hercules class



In Hercules we have been exploring a Diwali sensory story as part of our literacy lessons. Learners have also had the opportunity to explore making their own rangoli patterns and mark-making in our Exploration Learning Zone this term.

Learners explored mark-making using a variety of sensory materials: sand, water and paint. Hercules learners have enjoyed listening to music linked to the Diwali story to enhance their learning environment.



Exploring our learning zones has also offered the opportunity for learners to share space and resources which also link with EHCP targets. In addition, learners have also been generalising their communication skills within the learning zones, following their teaching inputs.



# Leo class



This



term



Leo



Class

were



visited

by



some



PE



students

from St.



Mary's



University.

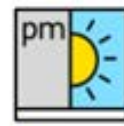


They



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fun

+

and



exciting



games

which



everyone

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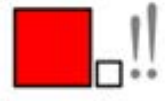
Leo



Class



enjoyed



hugely!





# Luna class



This term has been a real fun one for Luna class!

Our theme has been 'Reuse, Re-gift, and Recycle'. In Autumn 1, we focused on how we can reuse and recycle different materials like plastic and cardboard and paper. We really enjoyed being creative and using old clothes and accessories to dress up like pop stars, builders and cowboys/girls. In the exploration area we made some interesting guitars using elastic bands, biscuit tins and small boxes.



Throughout the term we have developed relationships with new peers and supporting adults. We are getting really good at sharing space and resources with our peers.

Learners are enjoying weekly sessions at the pool this term. They have been building their confidence in the pool. Some of us are even jumping in with a big splash!



During explorer time we began to recognise the different recycling signs for plastic, cardboard and paper in the role-play area. So, this half term we have been taking a walk to a local recycling bank to recycle our paper, card and plastic.

Well done to all of Luna Class Learners and Staff for such a fantastic term!





# Active Andromeda class

The Autumn Term has been filled with lots of different 'preparing for adulthood' experiences as we're learning what kind of activities the class enjoy doing and what they would like to continue to do when they leave Strathmore.



All learners have taken part in yoga classes this term to provide them with an activity to support their physical and mental wellbeing. As the lessons end, learners are now working in pairs to create poses, learning how to work together as a team and learning how to strengthen their core.

Joshua, Richard, Ben and Vincent have all been going to the SRR garden to support garden maintenance, working alongside SRR peers. This is the first time we have worked alongside the SRR secondary learners, and we will continue to do so for the Spring Term.



Jordan and Ibs have been supporting the catering team by serving puddings at lunchtime in preparation for creating our own enterprise in the summer term.



The whole class went to the charity shops along the High Street to purchase items to re-gift and re-use. This enabled them to practise independence skills such as shop etiquette, packing items, looking for items in a shop and using money to pay for items at the till.

We have had an art specialist in to create structures using items from the environment. Some of the learners asked her questions about her skills and her job.





# Capella class



**Wheels  
for All**

Learners from Capella class and Diljeet from Perseus have been having an amazing experience at "Wheels for all" Kingston, during the Autumn Term.

"Wheels for all" provides a range of specially adapted cycles (bikes and trikes), which means that our learners have been able to experience the feeling of freedom, and the sense of achievement that comes with inclusive cycling.

Learners have tried new movement skills in every session and have experienced new learning opportunities, which are linked to their EHCP targets.

In every session we have received the incredible support from the "Wheels for all" team, which has been crucial to our learners' development and engagement.

It is wonderful seeing the learners progress and their ability to try new things, even if it is challenging for them sometimes.

Well done Capella!



# Nova class attends Attention Autism

Throughout the Autumn Term, Nova class have been increasing their attention for adult-led activities to attend Stages 1, 2 and 3 of Attention Autism!

## Stage One

The leader will select 2-3 highly motivating items to play with from a bucket in quick succession to support learners with focusing their attention.

## Stage Two

The leader will perform a visually stimulating activity that is typically messy and lots of fun. Our favourites are cake splat, firework splat, rainbow sponge etc. The aim is to sustain learner attention for a longer period.

## Stage Three

This stage involves turn-taking and shifting attention. It begins with the leader asking an adult if they would like a turn, which then demonstrates the simple yet engaging activity to learners. The leader will then invite some learners to take a turn, but not every learner will get a turn, thus building resilience. During this stage, learners become aware of how to shift their attention to their own individual participation and then back to the group.

Nova learners continue to impress all with their love for learning!





# Perseus class - a trip to the charity shop



As part of our school theme 're-use, re-gift, recycle', Perseus learners experienced working in a charity shop in our Role-Play Area; where they completed the functional task of dressing and undressing.

The opportunity to visit a local business was given to all learners, who visited Twickenham High Street to source used books for the class Reading Area. Individuals walked in small groups and recalled information that they have viewed in the past – locating familiar signs in the community.

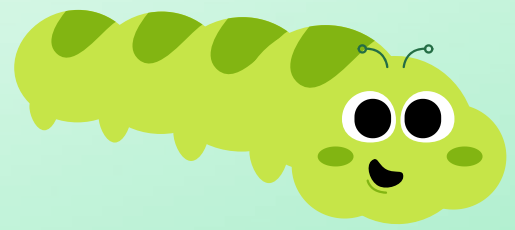
The TEACCH approach was used to follow the purchasing process. **Kian** used an instruction sheet with visual information, to select a book from a choice of toys, and he communicated with the shopkeeper to pay for the chosen item. He also explained to the adult supporting him the steps to follow – 'I need to tap the card' and requested the receipt after processing the payment. When leaving the shop, Kian showed the item to all his peers and shared the book with everyone back in school.

On the way to the shops, learners explored the path through touch, sound, and sight. Additionally, they worked on road safety for pedestrians by looking both ways when crossing the street.





# Phoenix class

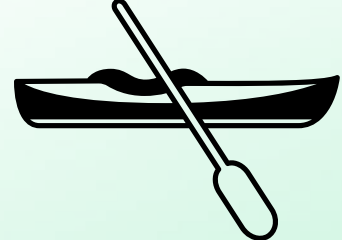


This term Phoenix class have been enjoying 'Fun with Food' sessions. The learners have explored different smells, textures and of course tastes!

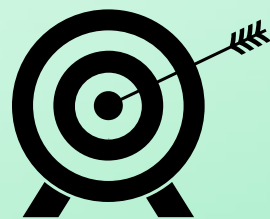
They have also made their own food creations. In the pictures below they created sunshine smiley faces and caterpillars. We discovered that chocolate drops were definitely a class favourite.

Well done Phoenix class!





# Vega class is great at sports



This autumn, Vega class have been doing a lot of exercise! They visited Thames Young Mariners where they practised their co-ordination by climbing, balancing, and participating in exciting activities such as archery and canoeing!

Learners have engaged in PE at St Mary's University with their peers from Grey Court. They practised gross motor and social skills in a new environment.

Well done Vega class!



# Aquila class



This

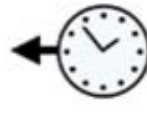


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Aquila



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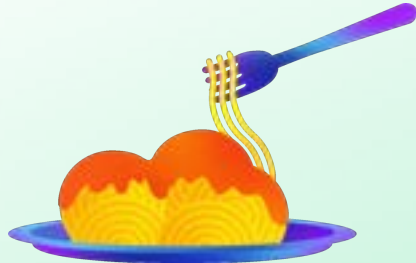
+

and



horse riding.





# Mira class lunch in the flat

In Mira class, we have carried on with the Friday lunches in the flat, from last year. This is a learning opportunity that all students in class voted that we should continue doing this year and it has been a very successful one. Every Thursday we have the students already checking with teachers if they will be cooking the following day.

For this term we have decided to start with something easy to prepare and students wanted to try pasta dishes. To accommodate all their dietary needs, we have used only gluten-free and vegan options such as mince Quorn or mince pieces, and they tried combining this with different types of pasta such as fusilli, penne, rigatoni, and farfalle.

On the day, students need to prepare all the cooking areas and get themselves ready to cook and set up the table in the flat by following task planners, which are linked with their own individual EHCP targets, and work on problem-solving skills in a practical way.

After talking with some parents at the parents' evening, we have also included in the meals other options such as okra and roti as side dishes, and we plan to cover more traditional foods and dishes from around the world for the following half-terms.



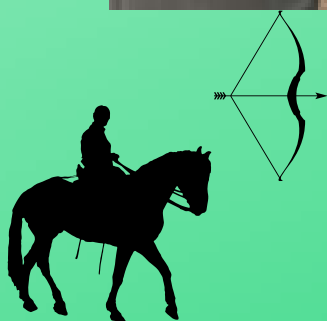


# Pegasus class community visits

Students in Pegasus class have engaged in a variety of exciting community visits this term. In October, we visited Thames Young Mariners in the local area along with our Grey Court peers. **Adonai** shared his memories after the trip: "There was lots of water, we walked there because it was close. We did archery and I shot arrows."

Earlier this month, **Adonai** took a private tour around Fulwell Bus Garage. He sat in the driver's seat of a double-decker bus and was shown how the different buttons and levers work. He also looked around the mechanics area where they fix the broken buses, looked at the timetables and got to take away some uniform.

**Pascal** and **Zaki** have been enjoying horseriding throughout the term and are becoming confident riders. Thank you Pascal and Zaki for carrying out the photography for us.



# Astra class - a new journey

In September 2022 Strathmore opened its newest campus based at Darell Primary School. This campus has one class called Astra class. Although we are a very small and new campus, we have seen great progress, big changes and lots of play!

We have lots of inclusion opportunities with our co-located school such as:

- Weekly Assemblies with Darell's "Walker" class - School Resource Provision (SRP)
  - Weekly visits to Reception and Year 1 for continuous provision
  - Joining Year 1 for their song in the Winter Concert
  - Lunchtimes in the hall with the Darell school

We have also been visiting the Russell Campus on Wednesday mornings. The learners have had opportunities to generalise their skills and have access to a sensory room, soft play and join in with music lessons.

Overall, it has been a fantastic start to the year with Astra class and we look forward to our journey ahead!





# School Council at Russell and Darell



## School Council



Let's



introduce



to



you



to



our



newly



elected



School



Council



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Strathmore



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and



Russell



Darell



campus.



Tristan,



Amelie,



Aimee,



Ethan



Our



learners



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School Council



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year



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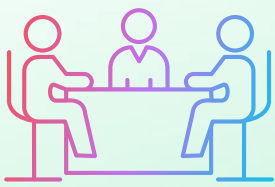
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ahead.



# School Council at SRR

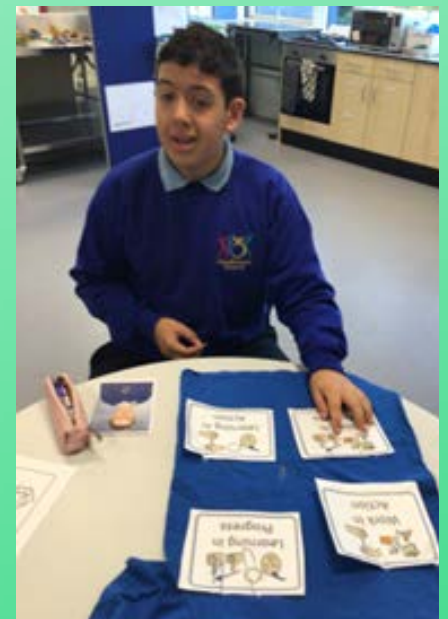


The members of the School Council from SRR campus decided which teams they want to work in this academic year (Wellbeing Team, Events Team, or Work Experience Team).

The councillors were very excited to vote for their favourite design for the personalised T-shirts made for Strathmore learners, to wear for PE events, and for the KS5 learners - on work experience in the local community.

They also chose the winner of the Jack Petchey Student Award and decided how they want to spend the money from this grant.

Some of the councillors went to the Poundland shop to buy decorations for things such as the Christmas dinner, decorating the tree and items for the winter concert. We also decided to locate the Christmas tree close to the school office, made some cards for the Strathmore staff and festive table decorations from the Christmas tree branches, kindly donated by **P Cooper & Sons Ltd** shop located in Twickenham.





# Physical development news

by Louise Ross



We started the Autumn Term with a whole school dance workshop in September. Karl from "Movement Warriors" was fantastic and managed to create sessions that engaged all our learners. He brought bubbles, dance ribbons, hoops, parachutes, and lots of dance moves for some expert choreography.

Barnfield Stables have increased their sessions with us so we can now offer horseriding to some of our older learners. Some GC learners have attended this term and SRR will be attending for the Spring Term. The feedback from all has been fantastic and we're delighted we can now offer this experience for more of our learners.

St Mary's students came in November to deliver PE sessions to our post-16 and primary learners. They used music, balls, bean bags, parachutes, and hoops to get our learners active with new adults. The positive energy in the room was wonderful. It was a learning curve for the St Mary's students, but our learners loved interacting with new adults and joining in with different activities.

For Autumn 2, a select group of learners from GC and SRR have been attending yoga sessions with "Soulful Touch Yoga". They have experienced yoga poses, meditation and storytelling through movement. The staff have commented on the increased engagement of the learners.

Thank you to all for keeping our learners moving in and outside school 😊.



# Secondary physical development

by Louise Ross



For the Autumn Term Vega and Pegasus Class have been attending weekly physical development sessions at St Mary's University.

They have been working on all their gross motor skills such as aiming, throwing and catching, in a new environment, and playing lots of games.

The facilities at St Mary's are excellent and the activities planned by the students have been engaging and stretching our learners. It was exciting to see **Ryan, Dexter, Raqib, Aduke and Sophia** attend some activities and enjoy the sensory bottles made by the students as an alternative to the group games.

There is an opportunity for the learners to have their snack in the sports hall which links with EHCP targets for eating food or communicating in new environments. I observed **Alyssa** having a kind interaction with her peers from Vega class, giving her the opportunity to interact with her peers from SRR campus.

We look forward to continuing working with St Mary's in the Summer Term when our post-16 learners will be attending for their annual SEND project.



# 121 after-school swimming lessons!

by Annabelle Warrior

Swimming lessons have been going really well this year. The students have been working on their independence in the water and have benefited from the more focused one-to-one sessions and the quiet time by themselves.

It has been lovely for the children to show their parents and carers what they can do in the pool and we look forward to continuing after Christmas.

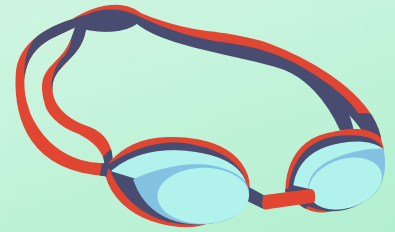


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# Swimming

by Annabelle Warrior



This term swimming has been going really well.

In **Luna** the children have been working on team-work passing a ball to each other and sharing resources in the pool. **Macsen** has been working on transitioning in and out of the water and remembering not to run on poolside. **Freddie** and **Saffa** have been engaging in pool races with each other. **Lara** and **Ilma** have been very focused on their own swimming but are tolerating others in their space and sharing resources. **Anaiyah** and **Luqman** have been playing catch in the pool, passing with their hands and their feet and enjoying each other's company.

In **Phoenix**, learners have been transitioning well in and out of the pool and have been tolerating being in the showers after swimming, which is very tricky for some children. **Aimee** is swimming independently on her front and back as well as jumping in and collecting sinkers from the pool floor. **Gracie** and **Taran** are working on swimming with reduced flotation support. **Elm**, **Sam** and **Saffa** are building confidence in the water and building relationships with adults.

In **Aquila**, learners have been interacting with the adults in the water, exploring the sensory aspects of the pool and lights, and working well on their skills for independence by dressing and undressing, with reduced adult support. **Ella** has been doing particularly well this term, initiating interactions with adults, by reaching out her hands and holding hands with the adult, while being towed around the pool. **Emily C** and **Faayaz** are beginning to be able to share resources in the pool, and **Hana**, **Joey**, **James** and **Emily F** have all been having positive meaningful interactions with adults in the pool.

In **Perseus**, learners are enjoying interacting with staff and peers in the pool. **Dilljeet** loves watching Kian in the pool and always laughs at him splashing and **Kian** likes to cheer on Diljeet when he is swimming. **David**, **Hassan** and **Lorik** are working on sharing resources in the pool.

**Leo** class have been going to Teddington Pool, in the big pool, and have been working really hard on increasing the distance they can swim with and without support. Some of the class have even learnt how to collect sinkers and do forward rolls in the pool.

Well done to all the learners who have been swimming this term and well done to parents for remembering to send in swimming kit every week.





# Family support and wellbeing

by Natalie Arciero

Autumn Term and 'back to school' seems a distant memory as we are all well and truly in the routine. A big Strathmore welcome to our new learners and their families starting in Delphini, Nova and Astra classes. It was lovely to see parents who came to face-to-face meetings for parents' evening, which was also an opportunity to get second-hand uniform if needed and leaflets on teaching strategies and other support flyers.



Our ACT Parent Workshop with the MHS Team from Achieving for Children had very good feedback from our parent cohort. All parents said the workshop was very useful and they would use the techniques learned and all would recommend it to other parents if repeated later on in the year. Some comments about the sessions were: ***'Great opportunity to meet and share with other parents in similar situations'*** and ***'Sharing experience opportunities as well as on specific issues like sleep; eating; behaviour etc'***

We were delighted to be teaming up with Sue Robson again, from "RUILS Bright Futures", for her post-16 parent information session held at the Etna Centre. She also ran a student workshop where Mira and Andromeda classes got to put down on to paper all their hopes and dreams for the future by way of a dream bubble! It was a fun session for all involved.



Advice and guidance is given for families starting on their post-16 journey by myself and the senior leadership team at Strathmore. By the time of the leavers' annual reviews in October, choices have been made as to which onward placements would be suitable and applications to next settings are under way.



As you have seen in the Parent Newsletter, we are working alongside Achieving for Children's "Parent Champions" and are proud to have 3 parents from Strathmore as part of the team. **Zeynep Sertkaya, Angelica Rowlan** and **Geeta Desai** are volunteers in this new scheme and will be joining various events wherever possible. Look out for them!



As a school we are working towards achieving the '**Leading Parent Partnership Award**' **LPPA**. This is a nationally recognised award attainable by schools who work closely with the families of their learners. The assessment is made by an external adviser and we aim to achieve this by summer 2023. You can help by: reading all newsletters, coming along to any events if you can, completing any questionnaires or surveys we send out as honestly as possible, as we can always look at ways to improve, which helps with all aspects of life.

Coffee mornings are advertised in the school Weekly Newsletter, as always, so please keep an eye out for the various dates.



Please contact me if you would like to book a 1:1 session for support or e-mail for a call back on any issues:

**[familyworker@strathmore.org.uk](mailto:familyworker@strathmore.org.uk)**

Remember that your borough's local offer page is a good point of information for updates on clubs and events this Christmas and beyond:

AfC Info website - Kingston and Richmond : SEND Local Offer  
Synergy ([hounslow.gov.uk](https://hounslow.gov.uk))

Wandsworth's SEND Local Offer | [THRIVE Wandsworth](https://www.thrive Wandsworth.org.uk)

Best wishes and enjoy the festive break!

**Natalie Arciero, Strathmore Family Worker**



# FoSS festive wreath workshop...



We came together to get creative and support one another.





Please e-mail  
**[foss@strathmore.org.uk](mailto:foss@strathmore.org.uk)** or  
**[familyworker@strathmore.org.uk](mailto:familyworker@strathmore.org.uk)**  
if you have any other ideas for future  
wellbeing workshops.

# Sensory strategies to assist with a bedtime routine



By Helen Knight, OT team



Your child needs help to settle into a bedtime routine. It is important therefore to decide upon a routine that is realistic for your child to achieve and set about introducing this.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

## Bedtime routine

Make sure that strategies are in place if your child finds bedtime hard to deal with. For example, decide if your child is allowed to roam around the house late at night or should be encouraged to remain in their room with supervision.

It is important that everybody's approach with your child is exactly the same so that they can be sure of the boundaries and that these do not change dependent on the person.

Once you have decided on a behavioural strategy for the bedtime routine, you could utilise sensory activities that prepare your child for this routine. Your child will need assistance to be able to calm their body down so that they can go to sleep, as it is difficult to calm themselves down to go to sleep when they are quite hyperactive.



# Strategies that you could use to help with bedtime routine to assist your child to calm down

**Environment** - the colour of their room is a consideration since bright and vivid colours induce activity, whereas pastel colours induce calmness. Also avoid vivid coloured pictures and displays on the wall when encouraging your child to relax and concentrate.

**Decrease auditory and visual stimuli** - some children find it hard to process both auditory and visual information at the same time. Imagine trying to talk whilst in the same room a baby is screaming, and the TV or radio is on loud. This can be what it is like for children at times. It is therefore beneficial to try and quieten the environment of sensory stimuli to prevent this 'overload'. This does not mean turning off all lights and no talking, as this is not a realistic option. Use relaxing music or calming music in a softly lit room.

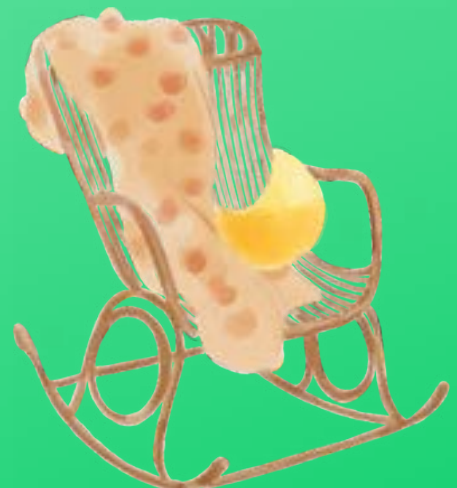
**Think of activities that you may use to calm yourself down after a hectic day like a warm bath. When drying after the bath, use a large bath sheet to wrap your child up in, as this can provide some deep calming pressure throughout the body. Dressing for bed whilst still in the bathroom may also help.**

**Sensory compression blanket** - sensory bed sheet for children - Helps children ages 5+ settle down at night time - comfortable sleeping bedding



First, a sensory compression sheet is not a weighted blanket. In fact, it doesn't use weight at all; it uses stretchy pressure to achieve the same effect. The effect we're talking about here is the calming effect of deep pressure stimulation. Instead of the heavy weight of a weighted blanket, the effect is produced by the consistent pressure of the tight sheet around the body.

**Provide slow rhythmical movements** - this activates the vestibular system (movement system). Unlike jumping, climbing, and running which would also activate this system, slow rhythmical movements are calming. Holding your child and rocking them backwards and forwards, through cuddling and walking around, or sitting in a rocking chair could do this.



**Calming through touch** - When providing touch give deep pressure like a deep hug rather than light touch, as this is too alerting. So, give deep pressure through massaging, back rubs or massages.



**Proprioceptive Activities** - proprioceptive information that can have a calming affect includes deep pressure through the joints or muscles. Games that provide your child with this sensation are crawling, squashing games with pillows, using a heavy blanket, hiding under heavy pillows and pressing gently through them. (Do not let your child sleep with weighted blankets or weighted vest.)



### **Dreamscene Star Teddy Fleece**

Weighted Blanket for Children Sleep Therapy  
Anxiety Autism Reversible Soft Fluffy Quilted  
Throw, Silver Grey, 100 x 150cm, 3kg (6.6lb)

**Certain aromatherapy oils** can also induce calmness. Oils can also be added to a bath or used when massaging.



### **Kids Sleep Meditation FREDDIE THE FOX Helps You Fall Asleep Fast (Children's Meditation Sleep Story)**

321K views • 5 months ago

Happy Minds - Meditations & Sleep Stories

Deep in the hidden woodlands there is a sleepy burrow which only foxes know... The very cheeky and mischievous Freddie the ...



### **5 Mindfulness Exercises for Kids 🌟🧘**

286K views • 11 months ago

Cosmic Kids Yoga

Here are 5 easy and practical mindfulness techniques kids from the age of 5+ can use to self-regulate, calm down, tune into their ...

**Encourage relaxation time like reading a story.**



### **Sleep app**

Created for children of all ages. Each meditation story has an underlay of subtle sound effects and gentle music which combined with Christiane's calming voice make them irresistible and a deeply relaxing.

This App features:

- A deeply relaxing 13-minute audio track.
- High quality professional recording techniques.
- Christiane Kerr's beautiful calm reassuring voice guiding you into a completely relaxed state of mind & body.

## **Safe and secure beds**



Some children require an extra level of care to keep them safe during the day and especially at night. Creative Care products are not a substitute for proper supervision but they can provide a much safer environment, enabling them (and their carers) to relax, sleep and have a better quality of life by using our special need beds. Creative Care products have provided soft, safe spaces for sleep and play for many autistic children that require a safe and soft environment.

### **From a Strathmore parent who would like to share her experience with Creative Care Bed Ltd:**

*After a few days of transition, T is sleeping on his own in the bed, since 11th September 2022 and has been having the best sleep of his life!! He has on most nights slept from 8/8:30pm-7am. The shortest night was 9pm-5am which was an excellent night's sleep for us before this bed! Even when he wakes, he is able to go back to sleep quickly (15-30min). It also takes a lot less time and effort getting him to go to sleep.*

<https://www.creativecareltd.com>

There are lots of success stories on their Facebook page and this Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/513561135834614/?ref=share>



**Please Contact Strathmore OT Team if you have any questions.**