



Hazelwood School

# THE NUTSHELL

Celebrating recent highlights at Hazelwood

19TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Dear Parents,

I love working at Hazelwood! One of the many reasons is the wonderful staff team we have here. This year, as a team, we are focusing on three areas for our professional development: adaptive approaches, wellbeing, and leadership. To begin the year, we felt it was important that all staff shared the same wellbeing input.

As part of our training with Adrian Bethune, we were reminded that children often learn more from what adults model than from what we say (Prof. Alison Gopnik). One of the healthy habits we are now building into daily life at Hazelwood is taking time for a walk in the woods.

These walks are not only for moments of stress, but a regular way of keeping balance, maintaining energy, and showing pupils that wellbeing is something to protect every day. Research shows that even ten minutes of movement outdoors can have measurable benefits for long-term health (Prof. James Woodcock).

You may notice staff taking short or longer walks during the day. Please be reassured that children's safety and supervision always come first. By living these habits ourselves, we also hope to show our pupils that small, consistent steps — like fresh air and movement — really do add up to a healthier, happier life.

Thank you for all your support at the start of this academic year. Our staff development programme makes me even more positive about the year ahead and how it aligns with our culture and vision, enabling us to deliver the very best for the children. I am looking forward to a wonderful 2025–2026 with our Hazelwood community.

Best wishes,

Lindie

Follow us on our social channels for regular updates on school news!



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Rachel has been working on the Discovery Arts Awards over the spring term and summer term with a wonderful charity in Brighton.

Rachel participated in a weekly music-making class where she made up songs, learnt about African and Brazilian rhythmic songs, and got inspired by her favourite things to make songs (squishmallows and cats).

Rachel has also been to art exhibitions to learn about artists and their creations. She is now putting together the evidence, and the last step is for her to reflect on the entire experience.

Well done Rachel!



Hazelwood School

*Staff  
Spotlight*



**Mrs Avila**

**Nursery Room  
Leader**

## WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The unique opportunity to be a great support for a child's early development. It's not just about supervising; it's actively shaping the foundation for their future. There are two things that I find rewarding, to celebrate the small victories, whether it's a child using words for the first time, learning to take turns, or conquering a new puzzle, these moments are incredibly powerful. Witnessing their eyes light up with accomplishment is what makes everyday special. I also love the collaborative environment - I'm passionate about building a supportive and cohesive team where we share ideas, learn from each other and grow professionally. Ultimately, it's about creating a positive and nurturing atmosphere for everyone - the children and staff.

## WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?

My motivation is rooted in my passion for early years childhood education and creating a nurturing environment for children. I find it incredibly rewarding to be a part of child's foundational years, helping them discover the world, learn new skills and grow into confident individuals. Seeing a child's "wow" moments is what energises me every day. This passion drives my commitment to provide the highest quality of care and education. My motivation comes from designing activities that cater to diverse needs and learning styles, and from fostering a sense of belonging for every child. I'm driven to ensure that all children, regardless of their background, feel valued and supported. Finally I am motivated by the chance to lead and mentor a team of dedicated practitioners, I believe that a strong and collaborative team is the backbone of a successful nursery room.

## HOW DO YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO CHILDREN'S LIVES?

By focusing on two key areas: creating a secure and loving environment and fostering their natural curiosity and independence. First to focus on building strong and trusting relationship. When children feel safe and cared for, they have the confidence to explore, take risks, and learn. I ensure my room is a place where every child feels seen, heard and valued. This is achieved through consistent routines, warm interactions and by taking time to understand each child's unique needs and personality. Second, I make a difference by moving beyond simply entertaining children and instead, empowering them to become more independent thinkers.

## WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?

Leading a new group of children through their developmental journey and implementing new, creative learning initiatives within my room. I am excited about the fresh start of the new group of children and it's a privilege to be a part of their lives during such a crucial stage.

Personally, I'm looking forward to exploring new European countries and learning about their history and languages as I'm passionate about learning new languages; my mother tongue is Spanish and I speak a bit of Portuguese and Italian.



## Parent Insights



Our very first Parent Insights sessions were held this week, led by Georgina Morgan.

Georgina holds a Master's degree in Restorative Justice from Cambridge University and is both Head of our Parent Insights Programme and a Pedagogical Coach. Each week, this inspiring programme will offer parents practical knowledge, evidence-based insights, and the chance to reflect and share in a supportive environment.

Whether you're curious about the latest thinking in child development, looking for guidance in navigating today's parenting challenges, or simply hoping to connect with other parents, this is a wonderful opportunity to learn and grow together.

### Upcoming sessions:

#### Resilience in Kids - Does it still matter?

- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September - 9 - 10:30am
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October - 6:30 - 8pm

#### Adolescence - More than just a Netflix documentary.

- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October - 9 - 10:30am
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October - 6:30 - 8pm

#### Masculinity Continued - What are we telling our boys...and girls?

- Dates TBC

We look forward to seeing you soon!

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## PSHE & Careers

A reminder to RSVP to the PSHE talk by Dick Moore on mental health, happening on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm in the school's theatre. The link can be found in the letter which went out on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September.

If any parent would like to come in and talk about their own career to students in Years 7 and 8, please email Mrs Herbert at [herbertn@hazelwoodschool.com](mailto:herbertn@hazelwoodschool.com)



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# Other News

## The Reading Roots Team has started!

An enormous thank you to the wonderful body of mums, dads and grandparents that are now The Reading Roots Team!

If you would like to join in the initiative supporting reading then do contact Mrs. Morgan on [morgang@hazelwoodschool.com](mailto:morgang@hazelwoodschool.com)

Here is the very first 'Reading Roots Team' member in action!



## Harvest appeal



Help support your local foodbank this Harvest, providing emergency food and practical support across northern Tandridge District.

### Donate food



Please donate an item or two from our shopping list, helping ensure we can provide food and practical essentials for people facing hardship in our communities.

### Shopping list

- Tinned meat
- Tinned fish
- Tinned vegetables
- Custard
- Rice pudding
- Jams or spreads
- Fruit juice (long-life)
- Bars of chocolate
- Shampoo
- Soap

Drop off on  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup>  
September!

**Caterham & District Foodbank**  
[caterham.foodbank.org.uk](http://caterham.foodbank.org.uk)

Caterham & District Foodbank is the working name of Caterham Foodbank - Registered Charity 1155330 in England & Wales. Poster issued September 2025.

## Harvest Collection 2025

Please help us support Caterham & Edenbridge foodbanks again this year.

We will be collecting items on **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September** from 8am outside the Sports Hall.

Thank you!



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# Nursery



## Blossom

The children have been exploring objects that move in different ways. They have enjoyed putting balls into the ball drop box and playing with different ICT vehicles. The children have been creative and moving different vehicles to make coloured marks on the paper and making their own ball shaped sun catcher. In the messy tray they have been playing with boats in water and exploring pasta with spoons and bowls. The children really enjoyed playing in the ball pit and throwing all the balls everywhere.

The children have also been exploring different dinosaur activities. They have been playing with the coloured chia seeds with big dinosaurs and finding dinosaurs hidden in sand and natural materials. They have enjoyed being messy this week by doing some feet painting and decorating a pair of jeans. The children have been exploring different shape sorters and stackers. We have also been moving our bodies different nursery rhyme music. The children have enjoyed exploring their new garden and playing with the big blocks and diggers.



## Maple

The last few weeks in the Maple classroom have been wonderfully busy! We recently centred our activities around the theme of 'Peter Rabbit,' which the children absolutely loved. A highlight of this theme was creating our own paper plate rabbits, and everyone had a great time with it! We also took advantage of the lovely weather by spending time outdoors, enjoying many books together. This week, we dove into our new theme, 'Old Macdonald.' The children are having a blast with animal printing and pretending to milk a cow in the garden!



# Nursery



## Willow

We've had a wonderful start to the new term in Willow! Despite a few wobbles along the way, the children have settled in nicely. Last week, we enjoyed exploring "Dear Zoo," matching up tigers and discovering different textures like grass, corrugated card, and fluffy materials. The little artists have been having a great time playing musical instruments while singing songs too! We've also had fun using paint to create dogs, lions, and frogs. This week, our focus is on "Amazing Aeroplanes," where we're using more paint to print aeroplanes and have made and decorated a hot air balloon!



## Elm

In Elm last week, we welcomed all the children into their second week. We are incredibly proud of how well they have adapted to the routine and built relationships with their new key person and the peers. Our topic last week was family, and the children brought in family photos to share. They talked about who each person was, and these photos are now displayed on our family board, much to the delight of the children, who enjoyed showing them to their friends.

This week, our focus has shifted to Elmer the Elephant and his array of colours. We have explored various Elmer stories and engaged in some Elmer-themed colouring activities. On Wednesday, we celebrated Jeans for Genes Day, and the children did a fantastic job wearing denim jeans.

Looking ahead to next week, we will be discussing "Goldilocks and The Three Bears" as well as other fairy tales. We will revisit our "Three Bear Behaviour Code" and explore the different characters from these stories.



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# Nursery



## Birch

What an amazing and busy first few weeks the children have had in Birch, they have loved exploring their new room and different areas within the nursery such as the library where they hunted for Goldilocks and the Three Bears book and exploring the playground where they enjoyed climbing on different apparatus and exploring the bikes and scooters. Birch have been looking at their family photos and talking about who is in their family and whether they have any pets or not, they have also been exploring different messy play resources such as shaving foam and making porridge for the bears too. Throughout the week, we have had many activities based around Goldilocks and the Three Bears, the children enjoyed a teddy bears picnic at snack time and have also been making bears with bubble paint, we have also had matching and sorting the compare bears as well as counting the bears too. The children have taken part in Jeans for Genes day where they were able to come into nursery wearing as much denim as they could find and taking part in colourful painting activities as well as a fun and colourful music lesson with Mrs Fryer.



## Hazel

Hazel is our new room and we're thrilled to share how well the children are settling in. During the first week, our focus was on making the Hazel children feel comfortable and familiar with their surroundings, as well as introducing them to their key person. In the second week, we encouraged the children to talk about their families, fostering a sense of belonging. They created a wonderful display by sticking family pictures onto a nest, which was a lovely way for them to connect with each other. Also, we've been exploring shapes and colours! The children had a fantastic time printing shapes using potatoes. We also took them on a shape hunt on the grass, which was both fun and educational. As part of the nursery's 'Jeans for Genes Day', the children used different coloured paint for handprints and fingerprints as well as mixing two colours to create a new one. It's been a delightful few weeks filled with creativity and learning!



# Nursery



## Pine

The children in Pine class have made a seamless transition into their new room. Every child seems confident and secure, already forging close bonds with key staff and establishing new friendships. To highlight personal, social and emotional development we have concentrated upon self-identity, families, feelings, emotions and what makes us unique. Every child has created a marvellous self-portrait to hang proudly in the room, with some children creating paper plate representations of their facial features too. Each child collated an 'All About Me' photo album too, which sparked plenty of fabulous language as they explained which relatives were in each photo. This theme was extrapolated to include discussions on our feelings and emotions during circle time and whilst at play in the tuff tray. The visual aid of 'The Colour Monster' books and puppets helped those children who found it difficult to express their thoughts verbally. The 'small world' table not only provided a backdrop for imaginative play, but also an opportunity to match numerals to amounts of family members. Allocated music, swimming, ballet and Forest School sessions have enhanced the children's excitement, development and learning even further this week too.

## Acorns

The children on the Acorn side of the Forest class have enjoyed the start to the new academic year. They seem settled and confident and always ready to take full advantage of the activities on offer in the room. Our initial theme of 'All about me' has provided the children an opportunity to think about what makes them similar, and different, from their peers. This has been reinforced by each child painting a self-portrait, carefully selecting the correct colours for their eyes and hair. The creation of our individual 'All about me' photo albums has further highlighted our sense of family and instigated plenty of dialogue as the children fondly discuss which relatives are in the photos.

This week we have extended the theme to also encompass feelings and emotions, using simple adjectives to describe how we are feeling during group time. 'The Colour Monster' books, colouring templates and puppets have provided an invaluable prop to help the children describe their feelings by linking them to different colours.

The children's learning experience has further been enriched with separate music, ballet, Forest School and swimming sessions...a great start to the term!



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# Reception

## Settling In

The Reception children have enjoyed exploring their classrooms and are settling in happily to their new routines.

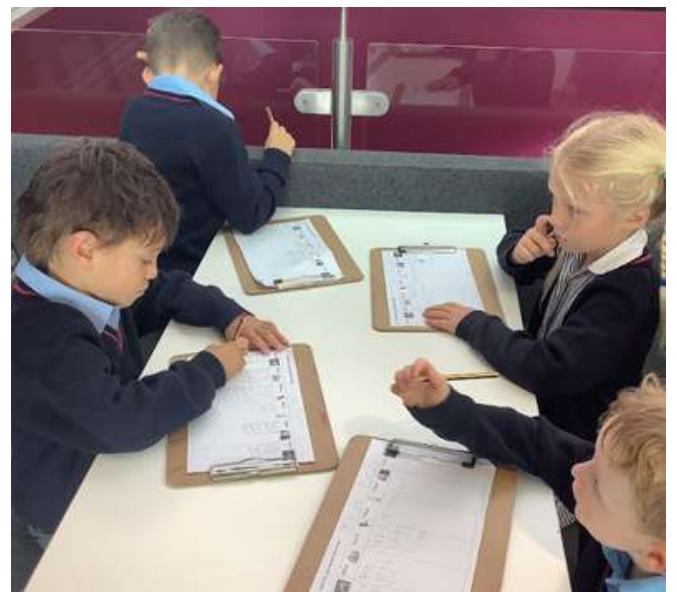




## The BOX

Year 1 had a fantastic time exploring the wonders of the Inside Box! We raced across the interactive floor to catch digital critters, built creative Lego masterpieces, and let our imaginations run wild as we drew on tables and walls. The room was buzzing with lively conversations, as children shared ideas and talked through the skills they were using.

In Science, we have been investigating materials. We became material detectives—searching high and low for objects made from different substances in our environment. We were especially surprised to discover how many everyday items are made from a mix of materials!





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# Year 2

## Temper Temper Trip

Year 2 had a great trip to Temper Temper to kickstart our 'Chocolate' topic!

We learnt about where chocolate comes from, how it grows and the best conditions for cocoa pods to grow.

We also made lots of yummy treats to take home and share with our family.



## Forest School

2T had a great afternoon in Forest School on Tuesday.

It has been great getting back into the outdoors with Gary, even through some rainy spells!





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# Year 3

## History & Reading Buddies

Year 3 have had a great start to their Stone Age topic using VR headsets and exploring a 3D model of Skara Brae.

We love meeting our reading buddies on a Thursday.





## Topic Day - Volcanoes

What a brilliant Volcano day! The children used VR goggles to explore inside volcanoes, created lego and digital artwork of volcanoes, visited the fire pit for a tasty treat, and then became researchers, designers, builders and scientists to create their own volcano from junk modelling which we erupted this afternoon.



## Forest School





## MATHS

In Year 5 we have been learning about place value to ten million. We used a range of representations on a place value chart and then took our learning into The Box for a place value treasure hunt. The children had a lot of fun and demonstrated great team work.



## SCIENCE

Year 5 has blasted off into their space topic! They explored the history of space travel and even recreated the solar system to scale using astronomical units.

The children were amazed to learn that while Earth takes 1 year to orbit the Sun, Neptune takes a staggering 165 years! 🚀🌟





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# Year 5

## WELLBEING

What a great way to spend a Thursday afternoon navigating Hazelwood Woods! Hugo and his team have managed a great fire. We are investigating what happens to a roasted acorn. Stay tuned!



## TEAM BUILDING

During our form time, the children's goal was to get from one end of the hall to the other using only the mat. The children worked brilliantly on their communication skills and one team was successful.





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# Year 6

## Reading Buddies

Our Year 6 pupils have continued to buddy up with Year 1 and 2 on Wednesday mornings for peer reading 📖📚✨ This is something they all look forward to each week.





## DT

Year 6 students in DT have started modelling their “outside environment” den designs this week. They researched historical timber houses, and modern contemporary designs. They all came up with an outside den for kids to play in.

They are making prototype models of their tree house style designs in card and small scale timber. Great start to the the term.

Well done Year 6.





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# Year 7

## Residential to High Ashurst

Our Year 7 adventurers had a great trip to High Ashurst!

They threw themselves into the incredible range of activities on offer, from conquering the climbing wall to navigating the wilderness with orienteering. Our pupils embraced every challenge with enthusiasm.





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# Years 7 & 8

## Golf Elective





## Maths

How many diving boards can be transported in a lorry with box body of 8m x 4m x 3m?

Year 8 took to the glass walls in Maths to solve an issue between an answer generated by the correct mathematical calculation, giving 266 boards and its *real world application*.

Given the board dimensions, they were not an exact fit, so how many could the lorry take? Answers varied, from 125 to 255 depending on the stacking methods trialled.





## Swimming Gala - Hazelwood vs Hawthorns



## Hockey & Netball

The girls have made a fantastic start to the hockey season, with teams from U8 through to U13 already enjoying their weekly fixtures. There has been lots of excellent teamwork on display, alongside some great passages of match play. It has been brilliant to see the girls' enthusiasm, commitment, and determination shining through as they develop their skills and support one another on the pitch.

We also had our U13A netball team compete in the first round of the Sisters in Sport national competition. The girls were playing Woldingham and they played very well and won 12-9. They now go into round 2.





## Hazelwood welcomes our first author visit of the year - Tom Palmer



Tom is an acclaimed writer of many books covering football, rugby and war. He gains a lot of his research for his books by meeting and talking with people that have been affected by some of his subjects, mainly war. His stories are so well put together and are very interesting, but not long to read so are accessible to lots of pupils here at the school.

Tom will be taking an assembly with Years 4 through to 8 and a workshop on his war stories with Year 5 pupils. We are very excited to welcome him to the school. A letter has been sent to those year groups detailing the books that are on offer at £7 per book.

**Please do not send cash, as payment will be added to your child's end of year account. Please note there will NOT be the opportunity to buy any of his books on the day! All orders need to be in by Wednesday 24th September.**



## The Children's Book Project - Christmas Collection

We are again running the collection of new and nearly new (but in very good condition) books for the Children's Charity in the run up to Christmas.

Across London and the UK 1 in 4 disadvantaged children owns fewer than 10 books, whilst 1 in 8 has none at all. This has an impact not only on these children's academic outcomes but also on their wellbeing, emotional development and sense of themselves as a reader.

The Children's Book Project directly tackles this 'book gap' and gifts donated books to targeted communities across the Capital. These schools and community groups put on celebratory book gifting events at which children are invited to choose a book to take it home and keep. The charity expects to gift upwards of 70,000 books this year.

For more information visit [www.childrensbookproject.co.uk](http://www.childrensbookproject.co.uk)

Please drop off your unwanted new or nearly new books that your children have grown out of and send them in to me in the Hazelwood Library from now until the end of November and I will ensure they are sent on to children who do not get/or have any books of their own. Let's help more disadvantaged children to enjoy the magic of books too!

Please note that the condition of books donated is very important. The charity cannot accept old, marked or tatty books since these are not suitable to gift onwards to another child. so please do not send any of the following :

- textbooks or revision books
- religious texts
- encyclopaedias
- DVDs or CDs
- torn, scribbled or dirty books
- ex library books or ex reading schemes



## Usborne Sponsored Reading Challenge

Our next reading challenge in the library is the Usborne sponsored reading challenge in the October half term.

More details will be sent in the next Nutshell edition.



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# Notices



*The Pavilion  
at Hazelwood School  
in Oxted*

The perfect space to hire  
for your next party,  
gathering or class!

- Large meeting table, high-level bench seating & tub chairs and coffee tables
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*Our Pavilion is available  
for hire alongside  
the Astro!*



**SOUTH EAST SURREY DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION**  
Affiliated to the British Dyslexia Association SESDA Reg. Charity no.281076

**Support Evening for Parents and Carers**

**Monday 22nd September 2025  
8pm to 10pm**

A chance for parents and carers to meet Committee members, who are themselves parents of dyslexic youngsters, and specialist dyslexia tutors, to talk about any concerns they have about dyslexia at home or in school. Some issues may have arisen since the start of a new school year. Session will include Study Skills and homework tips for all ages.

See BBC Bitesize for helpful advice in key subjects for all pupils. This meeting is free and open to all parents and carers who have an interest in dyslexia. It would be helpful to know numbers beforehand but not essential. Contact [sesdadyslexia@hotmail.com](mailto:sesdadyslexia@hotmail.com)

**Canada Hall, All Saints Church,  
Battlebridge Lane, Merstham. RH1 3HA**



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# Notices

**FREE TRIAL**

1 ½ - 10 years old

**BOOK NOW!**

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AT 6.30PM



## SHOWTIME PRESENTS.... KPOP DEMON HUNTERS

October 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>

9am - 4pm

Ages 5-11

£120 for 3 days/£45 for 1

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