



Dear Parents,

Well, here we are at the end of our first half term of the academic year, and what a busy few weeks it has been! It is hard to believe that we are already heading into the October half term holiday. There has been so much going on across the school, and I think everyone is ready for a well deserved break!

I must start by mentioning our fantastic residential weekend at Hilltop. What a brilliant weekend away we had! I told the children on Sunday just how proud I was of every single one of them. Their behaviour was excellent, but what impressed me most was their resilience, their willingness to challenge themselves and, perhaps most importantly, the encouragement and support they showed one another. Whether it was conquering a fear, trying something new or helping a friend who was finding an activity a little daunting, the children demonstrated exactly what we mean by The South Lee Way. They were an absolute credit to themselves, their families and our school. A huge thank you to all the staff who gave up their weekend to accompany the children. These opportunities simply would not be possible without their commitment and enthusiasm.

We started the school week on Monday by launching our Homeless Shoebox Appeal. During assembly, I spoke to the children about how something as simple as filling a shoebox with everyday essentials and a few thoughtful gifts can make a real difference to someone experiencing homelessness in Suffolk. It is so important that our children understand that not everyone is as fortunate as we are and that even small acts of kindness can mean so much. The list of suggested items is attached, and as South Lee is a collection depot, please do share the appeal with your family and friends. It would be wonderful to see as many shoeboxes as possible collected for this very worthwhile cause. Also, on Monday, our Reception children also enjoyed a wonderful trip to the pumpkin patch, with every child returning to school proudly carrying their very own pumpkin! A huge thank you to Mrs Phillips for organising such a lovely outing for the children.

On Monday afternoon, we were treated to another lovely Tea Time Tunes concert. I was so impressed with our talented musicians and singers, who performed with such confidence. It is always a pleasure to see the children sharing their musical talents. Well done to everyone who took part, and thank you to Mr Shepperson and his amazing Peri team for all their work behind the scenes.

Tuesday saw us host our very first SEND Roadshow, where we welcomed educational experts into school to meet with parents. This was a fantastic opportunity for parents to enjoy a coffee, have an informal chat, discuss individual concerns with the experts and share experiences with other parents. Thank you to Mrs Arnold for helping to organise this important event.

Today, I had the pleasure of taking my Year 3 TPR class to a Gurdwara in Ipswich. We have been learning about Sikhism and Sikh places of worship in our lessons, so it was wonderful to be able to bring that learning to life. I was particularly impressed with the children's curiosity, the thoughtful questions they asked and the respect they showed throughout our visit. Experiences like these are so important in helping children develop an understanding and appreciation of different faiths and cultures.

And what better way to finish the half term than with our PTA Halloween Disco! The children had a fantastic time, and it was a wonderful way to round off such a busy few weeks. A huge thank you to our brilliant PTA for organising another lovely event for the children. We are incredibly lucky to have such a supportive group of parents who give up their time to make these occasions possible.

As we reach the end of this first half term, I would also like to thank our wonderful staff for everything they do for the children. It has been a busy start to the year, and I hope everyone manages to enjoy some time with their families and recharge their batteries before we return for what is always a very exciting run up to Christmas!

Finally, on a more personal note, I wanted to share some news with you all. I was recently diagnosed with breast cancer, but thankfully it has been caught very early, which is very reassuring. My operation is booked for Thursday 29th October, during half term. This does mean that I will not be around when we return after half term, although I am hoping to be back in school and seeing the children as soon as I can, which will hopefully be in just a couple of weeks.

In the meantime, Mr Catchpole, Mrs Martineau, Mrs Thistlethwaite and Mrs Williams will be keeping the school running as normal. As you all know, South Lee is such a special place to me, and I have absolutely no intention of being away any longer than I need to be! Being at school with the children and staff has been a very welcome distraction over the past few weeks, and I am looking forward to being back as soon as possible.

Wishing you all a lovely half term break, and I look forward to seeing everyone when we return on Monday 2nd November. Best wishes,
Sarah Catchpole

21st October 2026

Upcoming Dates

Character Strength: RESPECT



Key Dates for Next Week:

Monday 2nd:

Assembly - Firework Safety

Tuesday 3rd:

08:30 PTA Meeting

Wednesday 4th:

12:50 Year 7 & 8 Catchpole Club Lunch

Thursday 5th:

Bonfire Night
Manor House Lunch

Friday 6th:

10:00 Q&A With a Member of Parliament
14:00 Governors Education Committee & Safeguarding Meeting

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