

The Stretham Scoop



Friday 28th November 2025

A bi-weekly round up of what's happening in our school!

Mr Sweeney's shout out:



Dear Parents and Carers,

It is 3 weeks until the Christmas holidays! Time is certainly flying. The temperatures are plummeting and it is wonderful to see so many children with the appropriate winter gear for being outside. Please can you make sure any gloves, scarves or hats are named so that they do not go missing. We are already forming quite a collection in lost property!

The last two weeks have seen the children taking part in our assessment weeks. These weeks are really important as it helps us see what the children are thriving in and which areas they are finding difficult; this means that we can plan appropriately on how to support them best! This year, we have moved to a new set of assessments that have been published by NFER. They are a different set than we have used previously, but the children are already showing incredible resilience and a positive attitude to their learning; this is no easy feat!

In addition to these assessments, the children have also been completing a piece of writing that uses the same stimuli across the school. This term, the children have been exploring the picture book 'The Journey' a book about a magical red crayon that takes the child in the story to many wonderful places. Reading the children's writing has been an absolute joy and it's clear to see that they have enjoyed this text too!

This Tuesday, we all enjoyed our Christmas craft afternoon. It was wonderful to see so many parents in school, enjoying a range of crafting activities with the children. This is one of my favourite events of the year (not just because I get to wear a Christmas jumper) but to see and feel the real sense of community throughout the school. There was such a lovely feeling all afternoon. Thank you. The school is now adorned with all of the decorations, but they will be making their way home before the Christmas break.

Governors visited the school today and were incredibly impressed by the children's knowledge, manners and respect throughout their visit. It was also noted how our playtimes are very different, with children seeming much more engaged due to the OPAL project. Thank you to Mrs Everest, Mrs Burling and Mrs Jeffrey for their hard work on this. These visits are incredibly important so they can ensure that the school continues to do what's best for our children and is moving in the right direction. Please do check out our governance page on our website for more information about our governing board.

With next week marking the start of December, the festivities are starting to increase! I am loving hearing Reception and Key Stage 1 rehearsing their nativity songs and cannot wait to see them perform in a couple of weeks. In addition to that, as an early Christmas surprise from the PSA, we will be hosting 'Purple Dreams Productions' on Monday 1st December for their pantomime performance of 'Rapunzel.' A huge thank you to the PSA for funding this, and we cannot wait for everyone to get into the Christmas spirit!

I'm sure by now that many of you have seen my disappointing performance on a well known quiz show last week. What I will say is that it's much easier doing it at home than it is in the studio. Thank you for your kind words and wishes. I will never eat a strawberry again!

My appearance on TV and the challenges after, has formed a key part of our assemblies looking at pushing ourselves and taking a risk. We have also explored how to ensure we are kind to all of those around us and how we can 'colour our world with kindness' by sharing wonderful thoughts and actions.

Our school council are currently looking at creating a new virtual tour of the school for our website and also looking at creating a play charter for all children to use and adhere to outside when playing. An important next step in our OPAL journey.

★ We Need Your Help – Come Volunteer!

We will keep asking for volunteers - especially as we get nearer to Christmas events; if you can help, even with walking to and from the church on the 19th December, please let us know!

Our school community thrives when parents get involved, and we'd love for you to be part of it! We're always looking for volunteers to help make learning even more exciting and meaningful for our children. Whether it's listening to children read, supporting activities in Forest School, lending a hand on class trips, or sharing your own skills and knowledge that connect to our curriculum – your time and enthusiasm make a real difference. Volunteering is a wonderful way to be part of your child's school experience, meet other parents, and see our pupils' learning come to life. If you're able to help, even for a short time, please speak to your child's teacher or contact the school office. Together, we can inspire curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning in all of our children! 🌟📚👧👦

I hope you have a wonderful weekend, whatever it is you are doing. Illness has unfortunately hit the Sweeney household quite hard, so it's a quiet weekend for us and maybe a trip to a Christmas market if our youngest starts to feel better. I hope that the Christmas light switch on goes well this evening!

Thank you for your continued support, as always.

Mr Sweeney and the Stretham Team

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Safeguarding @ Stretham:

Privacy and Digital Footprints

www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/sep/16/i-love-you-too-omy-familys-creepy-unsettling-week-with-an-ai-toy
Why is confiding in chatbots so tempting for children?

- Always available
- Does not require social skills such as confidence, eye contact or interaction
- Never judges
- Adapts to be 'the voice you want to hear' to please you
- Will discuss any subject • Will never tell your secrets to others

Some statistics

64% of UK children (aged 9- 17) have used an AI chatbot with use rapidly increasing over the last 18 months." The most popular are ChatGPT (43%), Google Gemini (32%) and Snapchat's My AI (31%). Vulnerable children (those with SEN, EHCPs or mental/physical health conditions) use them even more frequently (71%). 12% of users overall, and 23% of vulnerable children, use chatbots because they have no-one else to talk to.

Some refer to chatbots with gendered pronouns and treat them like friends.

Emotional attachment to chatbots can lead to:

- Reduced real-world help seeking
- Greater exposure to harmful or misleading content
- Blurred boundaries between real and artificial relationships

Many Chatbot experiences are not age-appropriate.

58% of 9-12 year olds use AI chatbots despite most platforms setting a minimum age of 13

Age checks are minimal or easily bypassed, often just self-declaration In user testing, chatbots exposed under-18 accounts to explicit sexualised or misogynistic content during sign up or conversations

Letters Sent Home:

Smoking and Vaping Workshop - Year 5 and Year 6
Health Related Questionnaire - Year 5 and Year 6
Tempest Photography - school photo deadline
KS1 Nativity Performance - reminder ticket orders
Christmas Lunch menu - 18 December 2025

Key Diary Dates:

Smoking and Vaping workshop - Year 6 - 1 December 2025
Tempest Photography school photo deadline - 3 December 2025
EYFS early morning visit - 4 December 2025 at 9.30am
Christmas Fair - 5 December 2025
KS1 Nativity Production - 9 and 10 December 2025
Smoking and Vaping workshop - Year 5 - 11 December 2025
EYFS early morning visit - 9 January 2026 at 9.30am

A very happy birthday to...

Isabella, Monty, Hannah C, Lacey, Alfie W, Marius,
Evie H, Matilda E, Romy

We hope you have a wonderful day!



Attendance update:

Well done to the following classes with the highest attendance figures this week which are above the national average:

Kestrel - 97.4%
Rabbit - 97.3%
Hedgehog 96.9%
Robin 96.7%

Please ensure that you make the office aware of any absences by **9am**, at the latest, each morning. You can do this via email, the telephone or via our Studybugs app. We now have a dedicated absence line, which is sent directly to the office email too. Please use the method of communication that is most convenient for you.

Nuts in school:

It has come to our attention that nuts are appearing in school again in snacks and in lunch boxes. We have a number of members of our staff community (including staff and children) who if they come into contact with any form of nut product, the consequences could be severe.

An allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock) can occur through ingestion of nut products, cross contamination and breathing nut dust in the air. Since this condition can be life threatening, we are asking all members of the school community for their help in minimising these risks by: a) Avoiding giving children nuts or nut products in their packed lunches b) Avoiding supplying the school with cakes or food items containing nuts for birthday celebrations, sales or events c) Avoiding sending containers such as cereal boxes for DT / Art lessons into school which may have contained produce made with nuts. We do acknowledge that some foods are labelled as 'may have been produced in a factory handling nuts and cannot be guaranteed to be nut free' or 'may contain nuts'. Such items will be allowed in school as it would be unreasonable to expect these to be kept out of school. Please note where a member of staff notices a pupil eating a nut product, the product will be removed politely and the member of staff will explain why this has to be done. A message will then be sent to the parent/carer to explain what has happened so they are fully informed. Due to the severity of this type of medical condition, it is important that all parent/carers carry out the suggested measures and reduce the risk of allergic reaction to those members of our school community affected.

We thank you in advance for your co-operation and support regarding this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school office.



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