



Mapplewells Primary and Nursery School Weekly Newsletter - Friday 23rd January 2026

[Welcome Message](#)

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an incredible week it has been at Mapplewells! Our children have continued to impress us with their enthusiasm and hard work across all areas of school life. From outstanding writing and creative work to brilliant teamwork and resilience, the effort and positivity around school have been wonderful to see.

This week, we were delighted to welcome parents into Year 1 for our Phonics Morning. It was fantastic to see families joining in with activities and celebrating the children's growing confidence in their reading skills. Thank you to everyone who attended and made the morning so special.

Key Stage 2 pupils have been showing off their sporting talents too, taking part in an exciting sports event where teamwork, determination and athleticism shone through. We are incredibly proud of how they represented Mapplewells.

A special mention also goes to our girls' football team, who gave a fantastic performance in the Utilita Cup this week.

Read on for all things Mapplewells...

Attendance

Our current school attendance after 17 weeks is 96.71%. Our current attendance by class is:

Birch 96%

Elder 95%

Elm 97%

Hawthorn 97%

Hazel 97%

Juniper 97%

Maple 96%

Oak 97%

Pine 96%

Rowan 95%

Willow 97%

Well done to Elm, Hawthorn, Hazel, Juniper, Oak & Willow class on their fantastic attendance this week! Let's keep striving to improve our attendance, to reach that figure of 97%.



Stars of the week

SUCCESS Stars of the Week! Congratulations to the following children who were chosen by their Class Teacher as 'SUCCESS star of the Week'. The children received their certificate in SUCCESS assembly today.

Ash - Marnie

Birch - Arthur

Elder - Harvey

Elm - Layla

Hawthorn - Kiyan

Juniper - Jack

Maple - Thomas

Oak - Amari

Pine - Isabelle

Rowan - Scarlett

Willow - Sophie



Headteacher Awards

Each week, I will be presenting Headteacher's Awards to children who have been nominated by staff for a variety of reasons — from producing amazing work, going above and beyond, to simply demonstrating what it means to be a wonderful Mapplewellian. These awards celebrate the values we hold dear and recognise the exceptional efforts of our pupils. We'll proudly share the names of our award winners in each edition of the newsletter, so keep an eye out for these special celebrations!

This weeks recipients of a Headteacher's Award are:

- **Harold** – For writing and editing a fantastic newspaper report capturing the drama and detail of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Outstanding work!
- **Emmy** – For producing a brilliant and engaging newspaper report about the destruction of Pompeii. A truly impressive piece of writing!
- **Emmie** – For drafting and refining a creative and imaginative narrative inspired by the mysterious world of Pandora. Wonderful storytelling!

- **Axel** – For brilliant reading: fluent, expressive, and confidently using blending whenever needed. Well done!

Well done to all our winners - we are so proud of you! Keep up the fantastic work.

Morning drop off

Our school day begins at 8:45am. The gates open at 8:30am and children may go straight to their classrooms upon arrival for registration.

For safety, **please ensure that children are accompanied while on the school playground** and are not dropped off at the school gates. Only Year 6 children with prior permission are allowed to walk to school independently. Thank you for helping us keep all pupils safe and supported at the start of the day.

Training for Flying High Partnership Sports Event

This week, children from Key Stage 1 had a training session with Next Level Sports in preparation for the Flying High Partnership Sports Event in a few weeks time. The children took part in the activities brilliantly and showed great enthusiasm! We can't wait for the event!







School Photos

A photographer from Jane Stapleton Photography will be in school on Wednesday 11th February to take individual photographs of the children.

- If you wish to have a family photograph taken of brothers and sisters who have a sibling that is not yet in school, we will commence photos at 8.30am. The photos will be taken in the school hall, please form a queue at reception.
- If your child is in afternoon F1 and has younger siblings, then you are welcome to visit with children that are not in school at 1.30pm to have photographs taken. The photos will be taken in the school hall, please form a queue at reception.
- If you wish to have a family photograph taken of brothers and sisters in school, we ask that you complete this survey - Individual and sibling group photographs - Wednesday 11th February 2026 – Fill out form¹

Every child will have an individual photograph taken, so unless you wish for a family photograph there is no need to complete the survey. **Family group photos will only be taken if the survey is**

¹<https://forms.office.com/e/NhvxlZrjSc>

completed requesting one, please make sure your request is made by 10am on Wednesday 4th February 2026.

Should you have any queries please contact the Office.



Online Safety

What Parents and Carers Need to Know About Roblox

Roblox is hugely popular with children, offering millions of user-created games and social experiences. This guide explains how the platform differs from traditional video games, and why its scale, self-rating system and automated moderation can expose young users to inappropriate content or unsafe interactions.

Aimed at parents and educators, the guide explores concerns including online communication, in-game spending and compulsive play. It also shares practical advice on parental controls, limiting chat and encouraging open conversations, helping adults support children to enjoy Roblox more safely and responsibly.

At The National College, our [WakeUpWednesday](#) guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formally published by National Crime Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](#).

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ROBLOX

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?
Roblox is an online platform where users can play and create games known as 'experiences' made by other users. Roblox has a large UK audience. ITV News has reported that millions of people in Britain use the platform regularly, with children forming a significant proportion of its users. The sheer scale of it makes it extremely difficult to moderate effectively, creating risks for unsupervised children.

A PLATFORM RATHER THAN A GAME
Roblox differs from traditional video games in that it hosts millions of user-created experiences rather than a fixed set of developer-produced content. Each experience is self-rated by its creator rather than independently regulated in content as in the case with PEGI-rated games. With millions of user-created experiences, moderation is largely automated which means that inappropriate content may reach younger players and have a harmful effect.

RISK OF ADDICTION
Roblox encourages repeated and extended play. Many experiences are made of short levels, events, and progression systems that can prompt users to keep playing for longer periods of time. Some games also use reminders, daily rewards, or timed events to encourage frequent logins. These elements can make it difficult to stop playing, spending long periods online and affecting sleep, schoolwork, or other activities if boundaries are not in place.

MATURE CONTENT
With much of Roblox's moderation automated through AI and operators self-certifying suitability, inappropriate content frequently appears on the platform. Some experiences may include content intended for older players. While Roblox has tools to restrict access based on age settings, these systems are not always perfect. Younger players are likely to encounter content you may deem unsuitable.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER USERS
Roblox includes text and voice features that allow players to chat in shared game spaces. While the platform uses automated filters and moderator tools, made investments have found that inappropriate language and harmful messages can still get through. There are risks that children could be targeted by gamers. In response, Roblox has introduced changes to how chat works. The platform plans to use facial age-recognition technology to restrict chat access between adults and children they do not know.

IN-GAME SPENDING
Roblox has a free-to-play business model and co-market include optional purchases using Robux, the platform's virtual currency. Roblox experiences are often free to play, but in-game purchases are common. This business model is common across online games, but frequently has highlighted cases where children have spent large amounts of money unintentionally or without understanding the real-world cost.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS
Roblox's parental controls provide an important starting point. Linking a child's account to an adult account allows parents to regularly monitor controls, limit communication features, and review recent activity. Regular updates, use of parental controls, and conversations with children about what they see online can help reduce the risk of exposure to inappropriate content.

PLAY TOGETHER WHERE POSSIBLE
Playing Roblox with a child can help adults understand the types of experiences available, how moderation works, and how children filter content. This shared engagement can also make it easier for children to raise concerns if something feels wrong. Parents and educators should monitor all games played on Roblox due to its self-rating nature.

CONSIDER LIMITING OR DISABLING CHAT
Although Roblox is introducing tighter age-based chat restrictions, some parents and educators may prefer to disable chat entirely for younger children. Children can still play games while communicating with friends they know through other supported platforms.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS
Many Roblox experiences are creative and age appropriate, and for many children, the platform is an important way to socialise with friends. Rather than banning it outright, parents and educators should talk openly with children about online safety, spending, and how to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

Meet Our Expert
Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechCrunch, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.

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See full reference list on our website. Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 21.01.2025

SEN Drop-in sessions - everyone welcome

As you may have read on our last SEND newsletter, we will be running SEN Drop-in sessions every term which will offer the opportunity to chat with Mrs Richards, our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator), in school about any concerns or worries you may have about your child. This is available to every parent in school and not just those with children on the SEND register. Our current proposed date for the Spring term SEND drop in session is: Tuesday 27th January from 1-4pm. You can book your 15minute slot via Arbor (Guardian Consultations section).

Body Image and Nutrition workshop (BIN)

Join Us for an Empowering Parent Workshop! Healthy Child Conversations: Let's Get Into Their BIN

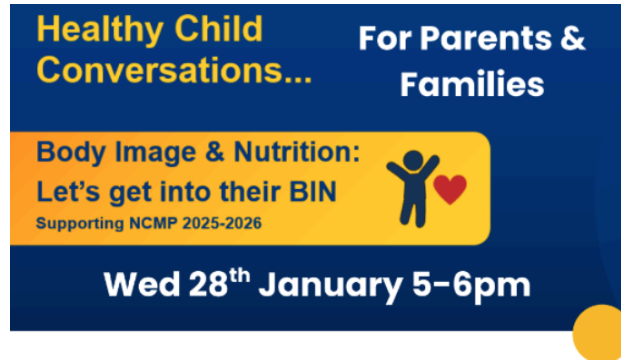
 Wednesday, 28th January | 5:00–6:00 PM | At School

We're inviting all parents and families to a free, interactive session designed to help you navigate important conversations around your child's body image and nutrition. Led by a family weight management specialist, this workshop will:

- ✔ Share the latest research and practical tips
- ✔ Provide tools and resources to support healthy habits
- ✔ Explore topics like selective eating, physical activity, and online safety
- ✔ Offer guidance on when and how to discuss weight and eating habits—while prioritizing mental and physical well-being

This is a safe space to reflect, learn, and connect with other parents. Together, we'll empower you to make informed choices for your family and encourage positive dialogue at home. Don't miss this opportunity to gain confidence and clarity in supporting your child's health journey! Please complete the Forms to let us know how many adults will attend or let us know by contacting the Office.

<https://forms.office.com/e/sUNr3HMdW7>



Spring 2026 Parents' Evenings

We will be holding our Spring Parents' Evenings on 17th & 18th March 2026.

Appointments will be allocated for 10 minutes per child and give you the valuable opportunity to discuss all aspects of your child's progress, to ask any questions that you may have and for the teachers to explain how you can support your child with their learning at home.

Details of how to book will follow shortly



Parents' Evenings

Instagram

We are very excited to announce that we now have an EYFS specific Instagram account, where you can see everything that is happening in our Early Years at Mapplewells. This account will run alongside our whole school account.

Please give us a follow at [@mapplewellsprimaryschool](#) and [@mapplewellseyfs](#)



Key dates

Please keep updated with our key dates as we will add to this over the coming weeks.

Diary Dates	
2026	
February	
6 th February	NSPCC Number Day
9 th February	Young Voices
11 th February	Individual Pupil Photos
13 th February	Last Day of Spring 1 – non-uniform day
23 rd February	INSET day
24 th February	First Day of Spring 2
March	
17 th March	Spring Parents' Evening
18 th March	Spring Parents' Evening
27 th March	Last Day of Spring 2 – non-uniform day
April	
13 th April	First Day of Summer 1
16 th – 17 th April	Year 3 residential
27 th – 28 th April	Year 4 residential
May	
1 st May	LCH Charity Colour Dash
4 th May	Bank Holiday – School closed
11 th – 14 th May	Year 6 SATs week
21 st May	Last Day of Summer 1 – non-uniform day
22 nd May	INSET day
June	
1 st June	First day of Summer 1
1 st - 2 nd June	Year 5 residential
1 st – 12 th June	Year 4 Multiplications Checks
8 th – 12 th June	Year 1 Phonics Screening Checks
19 th June	Year 6 Leavers Photos & Class Photographs
July	
8 th – 10 th July	Year 6 residential
14 th – 17 th July	Year 6 Bikeability
24 th July	Last Day of Summer 2 – non – uniform day
27 th July	INSET day

Mr Whittle

Head Teacher

Mr Latkowski

Deputy Headteacher