

Half Term 2

2025/26

Springwell Leeds Newsletter



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Welcome to our Christmas newsletter

I hope you enjoy reading about the wonderful range of activities that have taken place this half term across our Springwell Leeds sites. As 2025 draws to a close, it is the perfect time to reflect on a year of significant achievement and shared effort. We were delighted that our Ofsted report in March confirmed we continue to be a 'Good' school with effective safeguarding arrangements, which is a testament to the hard work of our staff and your support at home.

We also received national recognition, reaching the finals of the Education Today Awards for 'Best Overall School.' While we didn't take home the trophy this time, being shortlisted is a huge accolade. We did, however, secure the ArtsMark Gold award, celebrating our commitment to high-quality arts education and its vital role in supporting our students' personal development.

As we look ahead to 2026, our ambition for your children remains strong. We are committed to building on these strong foundations and continuing to refine our practice. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and partnership; working together is the most effective way to help our young people thrive.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a peaceful, happy New Year.



Scott Jacques

Executive Principal



The Haven

This Christmas, we have opened a new intervention space at South - The Haven. We have redecorated and repurposed Miss McMillan's office, to make it a communal space for children and adults to get some peace away from the day to day business of school life. The space has been designed as an additional, central space for pupils to have 1:1 and small group interventions or therapeutic input, focussing on Lego therapy, creative activities and reading - all things Miss McMillan loved herself, and saw massive value in for our children. Being located next to our Admin and Leaders' offices, it also means that some of her closest colleagues are on hand and can use the space to work with children.

Sadly, Miss McMillan passed away before we could buy her retirement gifts, so we have used the money staff donated to celebrate her life with a lasting tribute in the form of The Haven. Her love of wildlife is incorporated through little touches in the room, so those who knew and loved her will always have a space where they can remember her and the impact she had on our school.

Donations of Lego or craft materials are always welcome, so we can continue to grow the resource over time.

Football Victory

Springwell Leeds South's KS2/3 football team welcomed Joseph Norton Academy, for a friendly fixture, which was played in great spirits by both sides. Springwell secured a convincing 6-1 victory, in a great display of effort and sportsmanship. The positive and respectful conduct from all players on the pitch was the real highlight of the day with both sides showing exceptional attitude and behaviour throughout. It was really pleasing to see new players pulling on the Springwell shirt and two different key stages of the school coming together to produce a very joyful afternoon!





Welcome Henry, Our Music Therapist

Hello! I'm Henry - the new music therapist at Springwell. I have been a musician all my life, and have spent the last decade making music with people in all sorts of different settings; lots of schools, care homes, adult mental health settings. After completing my two-year training to be a music therapist, I am delighted to be setting up this brand new provision across a number of Wellspring schools in Yorkshire. I am continuously inspired by the young people I meet; it is the biggest privilege of my career to be taking on this role.

What is Music Therapy?

In music therapy, children can engage with music however they wish. Some children choose to sing or play instruments, others rap or dance! By focusing on what children can do, rather than what they can't, music therapy can build self-esteem and aid social and emotional development.



On Trak!

A big thank you to 'On Trak Community Initiative' for gifting Springwell East 15 brand new bikes, helmets and hi viz for our pupils to support their Sports Curriculum in school. On Track Community Initiative is a children's charity founded by Adrain Wood and supports young people with outreach work.

Post 16 at East

Somerville House staff came to discuss post 16 options with pupils from East - they brought a former pupil (Elle, pictured) who left East in the summer and is now successfully completing hHair and Beauty qualifications at Somerville House, with a mixture of theory and practical at Leeds City College campuses. It was lovely to see Elle doing well - and hopefully inspire current KS4 pupils to make positive post 16 choices!



Pantomime Time

On Wednesday 26th November Springwell East welcomed M&M Theatrical Productions into school to deliver our Christmas Pantomime, Aladdin. This was thoroughly enjoyed by students in all Key Stages with wonderful costumes, great actors and fantastic scenery. Lots of audience participation and fun was had. It definitely got us into the Christmas Spirit early. Primary can't wait for them to return in the Spring with Treasure Island!



Celebrating 7 Years of Nurture and Paw-sitivity

This month, we are delighted to celebrate two of the most beloved members of Springwell: our wonderful school dogs, Josie and Cooper! Not only are they celebrating their 7th birthdays this term, but this also marks seven incredible years of them being on site, serving as our four-legged ambassadors of warmth, comfort, and unconditional positive regard. Josie and Cooper have brought an immeasurable amount of nurture and warmth to both students and staff. Their presence can turn challenging moments into quiet connections and make good days even brighter.

The Power of Our School Dogs

Josie and Cooper are vital members of our therapeutic intervention team. Their role is officially recognised for the significant impact they have on well-being and emotional regulation.

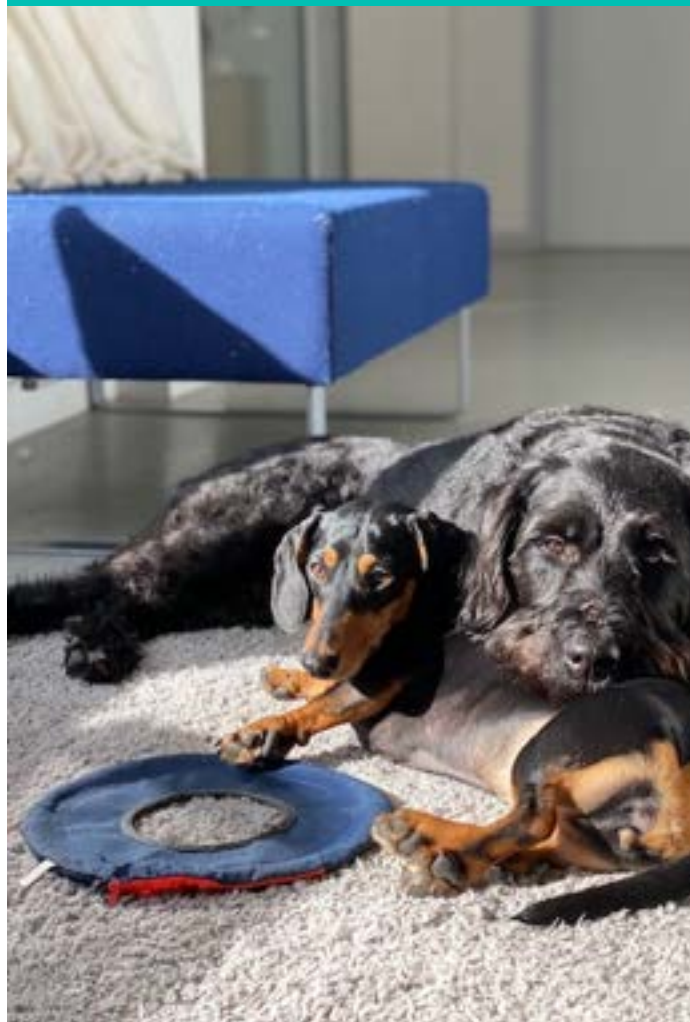
It is scientifically proven that petting an animal reduces cortisol levels. At Springwell Leeds Academy we recognise the importance of this and how it helps improve the mental health in our staff and pupils. Across our sites we have a number of dogs that attend school on a regular basis and provide intervention support to all of our pupils.

This support takes many forms, from a calming walk with pupils, patiently listening to students read to build their confidence or simply being around for a quick cuddle and a treat.

They are of course joined by their fellow pack members across our school which include Cally, Stanley, and Scout! You can read more about their role here : [School Dogs - Springwell Leeds Academy](#). Join us in giving a huge, heartfelt "Happy Birthday" to Josie and Cooper! Thank you for seven years of service, smiles, and snuggles. Here's to many more!



Happy Birthday Josie and Cooper!



Attendance Matters



How can we work together to improve attendance?

What if my child is poorly?

We can accommodate children in school with sniffles and minor ailments, and we will try to keep them comfortable, for example giving extra fluids, space to rest or a slightly shorter day. We would ask that parents liaise with us, so we can work out what is best for them on the day. If your child is likely to become dysregulated due to pain or illness, we would welcome a conversation to help keep them settled and safe. Some children really struggle with the break in routine that illness can bring, so it is always worth seeing what we can do to keep this continuity in attendance going.

What if my child is refusing to attend?

Call us as soon as possible, so we can offer a call with a key adult and/or offer flexible options such as a slightly later start or a meet and greet. Often children feel empowered to tackle any difficulties and barriers to attending if they can speak to staff in advance.

What if my child missed their taxi?

Let us know straight away. It is the parents' responsibility to get their child into school, so if the taxi is missed, please bring them in or try to arrange a lift with a relative or friend. In rare circumstances, we might be able to support by collecting your child.

What if my child has a doctor/dentist appointment?

Where possible, please try to book these after school or in the school holidays. We understand emergencies happen, and that it isn't always easy to get an appointment. Please bring your child to school before and after their appointment, to maximise their learning time and ensure they get their attendance marks.

Please remember, we welcome (and indeed expect) children to attend with minor ailments such as a runny nose or an ache or pain. If your child has been sick, give us a call to talk this through - depending on the cause, they may not need to stay home for 48 hours. If your child is unwell but feels able to 'give it a go' please call Reception...they can let the class team know, and we can get in touch if they can't manage the full day. Lots of our children struggle with the disruption to their routine that being away from school brings, so we would always encourage attending wherever possible. We can look to make short term adjustments to support them.

As the Christmas holidays begin, please use this opportunity to book things like dentist appointments, so these don't impact on attendance next term.

Key Dates

