

September 2026

NEWSLETTER

Park Hill Junior School



Learning Update

Welcome back! We are now four weeks into the new academic year, and I am truly blown away by how brilliantly all of our children have settled back into school life right from their very first day back. The focus, energy, and enthusiasm in every classroom have set a fantastic tone for the term ahead.

Seamless Transitions & Kind Community

I am exceptionally proud of our Year 3 children, who have transitioned into the Juniors so seamlessly. Stepping up into a new key stage is a big milestone, but they have embraced the challenge with fantastic confidence.

A warm thank you to all the parents and carers who were able to join us for our Welcome Afternoons and spend time in the classrooms. It was wonderful to share our learning spaces with you, and the positive feedback we received was deeply appreciated as we work together to strengthen our Kind Community.

Learning & Sporting Success

Enrichment is already well underway! Year 6 kicked off our educational visits with a trip to the Horniman Museum to take part in a hands-on Ancient Benin Workshop. The children showed inspiring Courageous Curiosity, asking thoughtful questions and exploring historical artifacts with great passion.

On the sporting front, we recently held our annual Cross Country event. It was fantastic to see so many children pushing themselves and cheering each other on. A special congratulations to our event winners, who have gone on to represent Park Hill with distinction against other Croydon schools!

High Expectations & Sustained Success

Across the school, our focus for this half term is on presentation and handwriting. We are setting high expectations for all pupils, encouraging every child to take great pride in how they record and present their work. The children have already demonstrated a real commitment to Sustained Success, showing resilience and effort right from the outset. Thank you, as always, for your continued support in helping our children belong, achieve, and grow.

Miss Arli

Diary Dates

Friday 2nd October	Horniman Museum 6M
Friday 9th October	Hello Yellow Day
Wednesday 21st October 2.00pm–5.50pm	Parent Consultations
Thursday 22nd October	Photo Day
Thursday 22nd October 3.30pm–6.50pm	Parents Consultations
Friday 23rd October	Flu Vaccines
Monday 26th October – 6th November	Half Term Children return Tuesday 10 th November

PHJS Core Values



SPOTLIGHT: YEAR 3

We are so proud of how wonderfully our Year 3 children have settled into life in the Juniors! They have quickly become familiar with their new routines, classrooms and expectations, and it has been fantastic to see their confidence grow.

They have made a brilliant start to their Junior journey, and we are looking forward to seeing them continue to learn, grow and thrive throughout the year. Well done, Year 3! ❤️

Cross Country

Year 3 had a wonderful day participating in the cross country competition this September. They had a chance to go to Park Hill Park with the whole school. The children had so much fun springing around the park to complete a lap. They were exhausted.

Geography

In geography, the children have been using their map skills to learn more about where they live. They have been able to locate countries in the United Kingdom and also discovered that Croydon is a borough in the south of London. This week, our lesson focused on Ordnance Survey maps and learning about some of the symbols.

Art

This half term, Year 3 are developing their drawing skills. Focusing on shading and the use of shapes, they have drawn some fantastic pictures of vases and animals. It was lovely to welcome family members into our art lesson last week; the children enjoyed sharing their artistic masterpieces

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium

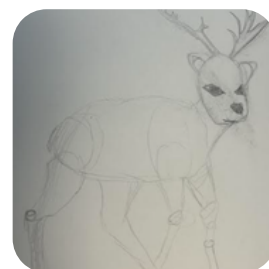
If you haven't done so yet, please complete the form linked [HERE](#). We encourage all families to fill this out, as any changes in income will be updated in the system. Please note the following:

- Currently, **all** primary-aged children in London receive Free School Meals through the Mayor of London's universal scheme. This will continue for as long as Sadiq Khan is Mayor of London.
- Under new guidance, families receiving Universal Credit will qualify for the expanded category (just Free School Meals).
- If eligible for the targeted category, families will gain Pupil Premium status, which entitles them to holiday vouchers, supermarket vouchers, and other financial support.
- For every PP eligible family, the school receives essential Pupil Premium funding that directly benefits your child.

If you have no recourse to public funds, please reach out to the school office. We can provide assistance with a separate form to ensure your family receives the appropriate support and entitlements.

Elizabeth Spendlove- Wellbeing Way

We had the pleasure of hosting a coffee morning with guest speaker Elizabeth Spendlove where she spoke all things wellbeing and most specifically the Wellbeing Way programme.



Attendance

Well done to 3E for having the highest attendance this month!
Our Overall attendance is 94.2% which is below National.

Class	Attendance so far %
3E	99.0
3ID	98.7
3S	95.1
4D	97.5
4F	95.6
4H	96.6
5D	97.5
5G	98.1
5K	98.1
6A	80.2
6M	85.3
6Mo	91.5



OTHER NEWS

Clubs



We have received several inquiries about our clubs. We want to assure families that more clubs are in development. We will inform families once they are available for booking. We have our live clubs available on the school website linked [here](#).

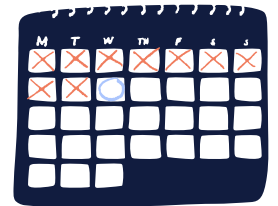
School Bags

We kindly request that children refrain from bringing backpacks to school. Each child should have received a branded navy blue string bag, which is the preferred bag for use. Families are also welcome to purchase any plain navy blue drawstring bag if that suits them better.



Year 6 Families – Secondary School Admissions

Applications for secondary school admissions for September 2027 are now open. Families can submit their preferences for up to six secondary schools through their local authority's e-admissions system. Please note, the deadline for applications is **31st October 2026**, and the national offer day is set for **1st March 2027**. **Please note if your child is attending 11+ exams this will be an authorised leave, but will still have an impact on overall attendance.**



Curriculum Payments – Parent Pay

We have a range of exciting experiences lined up this year for every year group! To help cover the costs of these activities, we kindly request that each family make a one-time payment of £20 per child. A heartfelt thank you to those who have already made this contribution. However, we are still awaiting several payments; please understand that our ability to organise and book these trips relies entirely on collecting these funds. If you require assistance with accessing Parent Pay or have any other concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to the school office.



Celebrating Success



We would love to share the wonderful celebrations from outside of school. If you would like your child/rens to be included in next months newsletter please complete the form linked [here](#).

WELCOME TO OUR
**NEURODIVERSE
COMMUNITY**

If you have (or think you have) a neurodivergent child and are looking to connect with other parents and carers, come along to our half termly catch up session for a chat, coffee, or number swap as we build our supportive community; or leave your name and number at the office to be added to the WhatsApp.

NEXT SESSION:
THURS 1ST OCT
WED 25TH NOV,
TUES 26TH JAN,
THURS 18TH MARCH
09:10 - 10:20 AT PHJS

 **FREE GIRLS FOOTBALL
AT WADDON LEISURE CENTRE**
PREMIER LEAGUE KICKS
OPEN TO GIRLS AGED 8-13

SESSION AIMS

- Introduction to football
- Open to all abilities
- Play games and learn new skills
- Make new friends
- Fun, safe and welcoming environment

WHEN
Every Tuesday - 4-5pm

WHERE
Waddon Leisure Centre
Putney Way
Croydon
CR0 4RG

BOOK NOW

 [PALACEFORLIFE.ORG](https://www.palaceforlife.org)
COMMUNITY@PALACEFORLIFE.ORG





Eco News – Autumn Term

Welcome back! We are excited to continue our journey towards becoming an even more environmentally friendly school. This term, we will be encouraging our children to think about how small changes can make a big difference to our planet.

Introducing Our Eco Leaders

Mrs Cooper has been delighted by the fantastic level of interest in becoming an Eco Leader this year! It has been wonderful to see so many children showing enthusiasm for protecting our environment and making a positive difference around school.

Our Eco Leaders will work together throughout the year to share ideas, raise awareness and help us make our school greener and more sustainable.

Save Energy

As the evenings become darker and the weather gets cooler, we will encourage everyone to think about energy use. Simple actions such as switching off lights, closing doors and turning off equipment when it is not being used can all help.



The Safeguarding Spotlight

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE) came into force on 1 September 2026 and sets out the statutory safeguarding expectations for schools and colleges in England. Schools are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place and all staff have safeguarding responsibilities.

The updated national safeguarding guidance also places increased emphasis on areas including:

- Online harms and exploitation.
- Child sexual abuse and teenage relationship abuse.
- Domestic abuse and coercive control.
- Honour-based abuse.
- Group-based exploitation.
- Anti-racist and anti-discriminatory safeguarding practice.
- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements consider the needs and circumstances of individual children.

Talk to Us

If you have a safeguarding concern about your child or another child, please speak to a member of our safeguarding team listed below. You do not need to wait until you have all the information before raising a concern.

Mrs Cooper, Miss Penn, Miss Arli, Mrs Griffin (Currently on Maternity Leave), Mrs Iwin, Mrs Mann, Mr Hassouna, Miss Colley, Miss Michaela.

If something doesn't feel right, please let us know.

Together, we can help keep our children safe, supported and able to thrive.

Online Safety

Having open, honest conversations with children about their online habits is critical, especially following recent incidents where children accessed games that were not age-appropriate and were left genuinely frightened by what they saw. Because technology evolves quickly and children often fear "rocking the boat" or losing device privileges if they admit to seeing something disturbing, proactive and empathetic dialogue ensures they turn to trusted adults for support rather than suffering in silence. The accompanying guide provides 10 actionable tips to cultivate safe, open communication at home and in school:

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE



Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS



Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS



Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

4 LISTEN ACTIVELY



When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or 'teenage angst' – or to assume that they'll simply 'get over' whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS



Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES



If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE



Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS



Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

9 PROVIDE RESOURCES



It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Kooth or YoungMinds.

10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION



It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUp
Wednesday®

The
National
College®