



St Hilda's School
HARPENDEN
Caring, Curious & Confident

NEWSLETTER

Friday 10th July 2026 No. 140

'The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.' Psalm 121

Dear Parents,

The academic year has ended on an emotional high today with the annual Leavers' Service at St Nicholas' Church, with parents, grandparents, siblings and friends joining the pupils in giving thanks for all the achievements of the past year and looking forward to the future. For our Form VI girls, it marked the culmination of their years at St Hilda's and their readings today were a touching reminder of the uniqueness of our very special School. Beautiful singing, readings (including the Psalm above) and prayers for those embarking on new adventures made for a truly memorable and emotional occasion. Afterwards, the whole school came together on the field one final time before the summer holidays began. We send our warmest good wishes to all of our leavers, especially Form VI, as they take their exciting next steps into senior education. Our collection at the Leavers' Service raised £408 for the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance.

Today we bid a fond farewell to Mrs Comer, our Deputy Head for the past seven and a half years. Mrs Comer has been a simply wonderful colleague and will be much missed by the staff, as we know she will also be by the many pupils she has taught and supported over this time, especially in Maths at the top of the school. Mrs Comer was touched by the many messages of thanks and appreciation given by parents and the very generous gift she received. I will also miss her very much as someone I have been able to trust and rely on, including leading the school so capably during my sabbatical in the winter. We all wish Mrs Comer every success in her new ventures, especially setting up her Maths competition initiative in schools across the area, and to her family as her son leaves our Nursery and starts school in September. We also wish Mrs Ackerman in our Nursery every success as she moves to a new role at the Highfield Nursery in September.

The pages that follow offer a snapshot of the many experiences, achievements and memorable moments that have filled the past few months. It has been an exceptionally busy period across the school, and this collection highlights so much that could otherwise pass unnoticed. I hope you will enjoy taking the time to look through it.

A huge thank you goes to FOSH for their tireless dedication throughout the year. Their remarkable fundraising efforts have generated just over £21,000 for the school—an outstanding achievement. Together with the generous gift from our Form VI pupils, these funds will help support a number of exciting projects. Thank you to everyone who made this possible.

As another school year draws to a close, I would like to thank you sincerely for your continued support. It has been a privilege to watch our pupils grow in confidence, flourish in their learning and make such impressive progress across so many areas of school life. My thanks also go to our exceptional staff, whose commitment, care and expertise inspire your children to achieve their very best every day. I wish every member of our school community a happy, restful and enjoyable summer. May it be filled with precious time together, opportunities to relax and plenty of moments to recharge before we look forward to another exciting school year.

With my warmest regards

Dan Sayers
Headmaster

PUFFINS (PRE – NURSERY)

It has been a super fun-filled Summer Term in Puffins.



Earlier in the year we spent lots of time gardening and planting an array of fruits, vegetables and flowers. We have enjoyed caring for our plants and have recently begun to enjoy the fruits of our labour. We dug up our lovely crop of new potatoes,

scrubbed them clean and then asked the cook to prepare them for our lunch. Yummy!



We took part in our first ever Sports Day and were so brave running as fast as we could down the track in the blazing heat, in front of the cheering crowd. We were very proud of ourselves!

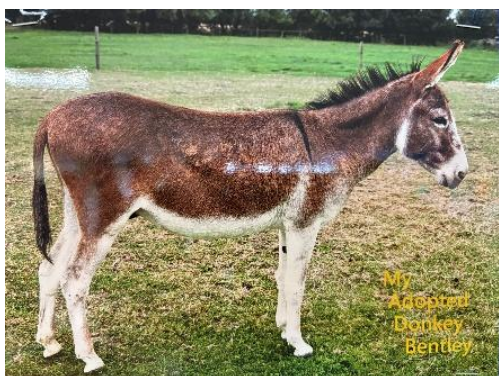


At the end of the term, we spent a great morning in the Kittiwakes classroom preparing us for our move to Kittiwakes in September. We are really familiar with all the teachers in Kittiwakes as they look after us now each lunchtime and in the afternoons, so we were confident and very excited to see what it will be like



being a full-time Kittiwake!

This term we've had such fun learning about space, sea creatures, and zoo animals. We have made some beautiful art and craft work and have learnt so much about these topics.



We also adopted a donkey called Bentley this term. Our teachers went to visit him and they gave us photos and a toy donkey. We are going to care for donkey and make sure he has a good life.

KITTIWAKES (NURSERY)

It has been a very exciting Summer Term finale following a busy year in the Kittiwakes class.

On a sporting front we enjoyed swimming sessions in the pool accompanied by our wonderful parent helpers and teachers. The first week we dodged the ever-changing rainy/sunny weather and went on to have some glorious sunny fun-filled sessions.

We joined the rest of the school for Sports Day and showed our resilience and positive attitude taking part in a flat running race, the egg and spoon and the sack race. We all did our very best, cheered on by the huge crowd.



We have had a very social half-term inviting our lovely Daddies into school to play with us for a super-fun Father's Stay and Play session. Thank you for joining us for our fun and learning, it was a truly special moment!



The socializing continued as we met up with our Form V Buddies for one final session. We had a yummy picnic on the field and then had an exhilarating time running through the sprinkler together and playing games on the field. Thank you Buddies, you have been an inspiration for our future time at St Hilda's.

In our final few weeks, we spent time in our new classes, meeting our teachers and getting fully prepared for our future school journey. It's been a super year of learning and fun. Our teachers will miss us all but know we are ready for what's to come!!

RECEPTION

Reception have had a wonderful year full of fun, laughter, learning and independence. There have been a lot of firsts with the girls taking part and performing in all the church services from the Nativity service to the End of Term Leavers' service.

We also performed in the fabulous Junior show 'Croak!', took a whole school assembly and sang in a variety of services.



We have loved learning about a variety of topics especially Our Town and Space. Did you know that the Nickey line is 7 miles long? Also that Saturn has rings made of Ice whereas Jupiter has rings made of dust?



We are looking forward to starting back at school in September as Form I girls!

FORM I

What a year we have had in Form One! A year full of learning, creativity, experiences, and laughter!

We became green-fingered gardeners, through our themed Show and Tell, based on 'Growth'. We all took time to grow plants at school and at home, and made super presentations to share with our friends. Our presentation skills are now second to none!



In Science, we loved finding out about dangerous plants. We made super posters in groups to help people to identify them on walks and warn them of the dangers.



In Art, we studied different flowers and sketched them carefully. We used watercolours to paint our pretty landscapes and added a detailed minibeast to our pictures inside a magnifying glass. We also used our painting skills to paint flowers to add to our face portraits to make super Frida Kahlo-style portraits. We used clay to make detailed little feathers to accompany our 'Magic Feather' stories in English.



We loved taking part in the Junior Show 'Croak', showcasing our crazy dance moves and beautiful singing, alongside Reception and II.



Form
watch

We ended the year with a trip to the theatre to the brilliant story, 'The Lion Inside' by Rachel Bright, come to life on the stage. We started the year with this story, learning how we can all feel quiet and reserved at times, as well as loud and brave at other times!



What a busy term! We are becoming more resilient, confident, independent

learners and can't wait for the next chapter to begin again in Form II in September. Happy Summer Holidays Form One!



FORM II

The Form II girls have had an incredibly busy Summer Term.

The term began with the Form II Class Concert. The girls worked hard to practice their pieces both at home and with their music teachers.

Just before the half term holiday, Form II were performing again with the Junior Production of Croak. The girls had to remember many lines, both spoken and sung. Teachers and parents were amazed at how confidently they acted their parts. Didn't they look amazing too in their costumes and make-up!



On the first day back after the holiday the girls went out on their first trip of the term. They had a wonderful session in the woodland as Outdoor Learners. Much fun was had making wands for the forest elves and of course lots of den building too.

The following week we were off again to Willesden to take part in the ISA Multi Skills Sports Festival. Our 2 teams

competed against more than 20 other schools. The girls were incredible and by the end of the day, both teams had earned impressive scores. It was also lovely to hear such positive comments from other teachers too, on both the girls' level of skills and their sportsmanship.



The History workshop on the 18th June, was another highlight for the girls. They enjoyed a fully immersive day with James from Altru Drama and thoroughly enjoyed all of the activities on the day. The day ended with a short performance displayed to parents and friends. What a fun, sunny, beachy kind of day! This workshop tied in nicely with our History topic, 'Seaside Holidays from the Past'. We had a wonderful few weeks learning about Victorian seaside holidays and were fascinated to learn about bathing machines, donkey rides and the original Punch and Judy shows!



Our final trip of the term was to the Paddington Experience in London. We had a fabulous day! The girls enjoyed the journey through London and had fun

spotting landmarks they had learnt about in Geography.

The Paddington Experience was incredible – the girls were fully immersed into a wonderful land of storytelling and it was lovely to see the stories they had read through the year, brought to life. After a picnic on the South Bank, it was time for the journey back to school, with yet more excitement about seeing famous architecture around the city, from the coach.



Activity Week was very creative this year. With the theme of Around the World, the girls enjoyed time with their houses, dancing and producing House silk paintings. The silk paintings are to be displayed so do watch out for them! Mrs Buckland, Mrs Kendall and Mrs Chambers have had such an amazing year with your wonderful girls. We have all learnt lots and had fun doing so. Well done Form II, your teachers are very proud of you all.

FORM III

During the Summer Term Form III went on their first residential trip to Grafham Water! They were all so excited and couldn't wait to go with their friends in Form IV. They had a fantastic time taking part in activities such as rock climbing, climbing the Jacob's ladder, kayaking, raft building and archery! They learned how to overcome their fears, how to work as part of a team and how to keep going when things aren't going so well! Sleeping in the dormitories with their friends was very exciting and the teachers and the staff at the centre complimented them all on their efforts and behaviour.



In Maths this term the girls have worked really hard to learn to tell the time! They have learned about telling the time at 5 minute intervals, one minute intervals and then they have converted these times into digital time which is quite complicated, remembering to think about whether the time is a 'past' or a 'to' time and then remembering to say and write the hour first when using digital time. What an amazing effort they have put in!



In English we have been reading 'The Hodgehog'. The girls have analysed the story, written comprehension style answers in relation to the story and have also created a fact file on hedgehogs through independent research using information from books and the internet. To finish off our topic, we created our own hedgehogs using clay and paint!



What a fantastic year Form IV have had! They have been working incredibly hard and their motivation and perseverance has been second to none.

One of the highlights of the term was our residential trip to Grafham Water where Form IV demonstrated their unstoppable team spirit. They were praised highly by instructors for their excellent listening skills and exemplary behaviour.

We have some keen historians in Form IV and the children enjoyed learning about the Battle of Hastings this term. They had some great ideas about who should succeed Edward the Confessor and why. We are proud to have a class of girls who are ready for the challenges in Form V!



FORM V

What a memorable year it has been for FV! We have enjoyed a wide range of learning opportunities, creative projects and fun experiences throughout the year. One of the highlights has been spending time with our Nursery buddies, building friendships and sharing activities together.



This term has been especially busy, with our inspiring visit to the Henry Moore Museum encouraging us to think creatively and appreciate sculpture in new ways. Our residential trip to Cranedale was another standout moment, full of adventure, teamwork and

experiences that we will never forget. We also thoroughly enjoyed meeting author Nizrana Farook, whose visit inspired us as readers and writers, and taking part in a Fantastic Science workshop that sparked curiosity and excitement across the class.



It has been wonderful to see how much every student has grown in confidence, independence and resilience throughout the year. We are incredibly proud of all that the FV children have achieved and look forward to seeing what they accomplish next. Have a fantastic summer!



FORM VI

Summer Term has proved to be an incredibly busy term for Form VI with trips, visitors, competitions, sports, music events, and leavers preparations. The girls have taken it all in their stride and supported one another through their final term – seizing the moments and making fond memories.



We are incredibly proud of each child and their own personal journey this year and are pleased to see them leave St. Hilda's confident and ready for their next steps.



ART



Form VI self portraits inspired by Frida Kahlo



Another wonderfully creative year has come to a close at St Hilda's. I hope you all have a chance to view the stunning artwork on display around the school; the exceptional quality of work across all year groups, from Nursery right up to Form VI, is truly impressive. Each individual pupil has explored and delighted in expressing their thoughts, feelings, and unique impressions through visual creativity. As we head into the holidays, I hope you get the opportunity to visit some of the fabulous art exhibitions opening in London this summer, or in any other cities you may be visiting. I leave you with a few images of the beautiful creations we are celebrating from this year. Well done, everyone! Wishing you all a fun, relaxing, and deeply creative summer.

Ms Fairbairn



Form I



Form III & IV Tie Dye cushions

ADT SUMMER NEWS 2026

Expression in Color
and Line & Form.

July 2026 |



Exceptional oil paste Still Life studies by Form III & IV



Expressive print making created by Winter Chapman in Form V



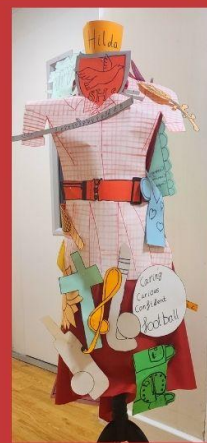
Form VI Leavers quilt



Nursery create a fantasy landscape.



One of the super new murals created by visiting artist Lily Tull.



7 Girls from Form V explore what it means to be a St Hilda's Girl

IN HER RESEARCH ON CREATIVE WELLBEING, PROFESSOR DAISY FANCOURT HIGHLIGHTS THAT ENGAGING IN THE ARTS FULFILLS CORE PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS THAT ARE THE VERY BUILDING BLOCKS OF OUR MENTAL HEALTH—GIVING US A SENSE OF AUTONOMY, CONTROL, AND MASTERY. THIS YEAR, EVERY INDIVIDUAL PUPIL AT ST HILDA'S HAS TRULY EMBRACED THAT OPPORTUNITY, DELIGHTING IN EXPRESSING THEIR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND IMPRESSIONS THROUGH THEIR VISUAL CREATIVITY.

SPORTS

We have come to the end of another busy sporting calendar and, as we reflect on the year, we remember that the essence of sport – particularly at Prep school – is about enjoyment, learning new skills and doing your best.

We have covered a range of sports throughout the year, including netball, hockey, football, lacrosse, swimming, cricket, rounders and athletics. From developing fundamental motor skills in Nursery to learning to pass a baton in a relay, playing House rounders or competing at national level, we are delighted to see children show teamwork, commitment, progress and, above all, a love of sport.

Here are some highlights and memories from our 2025/26 season:

National Success

This year brought exceptional success on the national stage. Competing at some of the country's most prestigious sporting venues, our girls produced outstanding performances, achieving personal bests, medals and historic results for the school.



Imogen D qualified for the ISA Swimming Finals, held in the Olympic Pool, London. She won a bronze medal (with a PB) in the 50m backstroke, and also swam a PB in the 50m butterfly.

Lucy R and Lizzie H qualified for the ISA Athletics Finals, held at Alexander Stadium, Birmingham. Lucy is our first competitor to win a Regional field event and go through to the National Finals, where she finished 4th overall in the Long Jump. Lizzie was selected



for the 4 x100m relay and her run as part of the London North team saw her bring home a bronze medal.



Lizzie H also qualified for the National Cross-Country Championships at Himley Hall, Dudley.



DRAMA

A Year of Confidence, Creativity and Character

What a fantastic year it has been in Drama! The Seagull has been filled with imagination, laughter, teamwork and creativity as the girls have grown into confident performers and storytellers. Every year group has had something special to celebrate.

FI — Finding Their (Webbed) Feet on Stage

FI have built confidence while exploring character through voice, movement and expression. They delighted audiences in *Croak!*, bringing their cheeky frogs to life with energy, enthusiasm and personality.

FII — Growing as Performers

FII have developed their teamwork, script work and performance skills through *Croak!*, taking on a variety of roles with confidence and supporting one another brilliantly as an ensemble.

FIII— Small but Mighty!

FIII have proved that great things really do come in small packages! They have been a fantastic team this year, working together with enthusiasm, imagination and creativity.

FIV — Creative Curiosity

FIV explored character, performance styles and storytelling in different spaces before bringing Greek myths to life. Their creativity also shone in the Summer Concert as they became works of art through performance.

FV — Taking the Lead

FV have grown into thoughtful, independent performers, exploring character and storytelling before self-directing their own mini plays. Their confidence and creativity were evident in the Summer Concert, and they are ready for the exciting challenges of FVI.

FVI 6 — A Final Bow

What an incredible year FVI have had! FVI enjoyed a memorable final year, from exploring *Macbeth* to their fantastic production of *YeHa!* and a wonderful finale in the Summer Concert. They leave St Hilda's as confident, creative performers, and we wish them every success in the future.



LAMDA Success!

It has been another outstanding year for LAMDA. Over 60 girls from Years 2–6 took Acting and Verse & Prose examinations, with our February session achieving a fantastic 100% pass rate and 90% of pupils awarded Distinctions. These results reflect the girls' hard work, dedication and growing confidence. We now eagerly await the results from our July examinations! Fingers crossed!

Drama Beyond the Classroom!

Drama has continued to flourish beyond lessons. Pupils enjoyed a festive Christmas workshop, creating their own potted pantomime, followed by a fun-filled Easter Workshop Week packed with performance and creativity. We are already looking forward to our Summer Drama and Musical Theatre Workshop at the start of the holidays.

Final Curtain Call

What a wonderful year of imagination, creativity and performance! Every pupil should be incredibly proud of the confidence they have gained, the characters they have created and the stories they have shared. It has been a joy to watch them grow, support one another and shine on and off the stage.

MUSIC

Congratulations to all the Junior girls on such a wonderful production of 'Croak' earlier this term. They all worked very hard to learn the songs and it was such a delight to see them performing with bags of enthusiasm and confidence. PHOTO from Croak

Reception - the girls have been learning how to match their names with written rhythms as well as using drum sticks to play one of their favourite circle games; "Bubblemum, bubblemum, chew and blow!" More recently they have enjoyed exploring musical sounds with percussion instruments (including the coconut shells and mark tree!) and have been creating different types of atmosphere by playing instruments in new ways. They took turns to conduct each other playing gradually louder and softer!

FI have had fun learning to respond to special cues in a game called "Pirates" where they listen to musical instructions played on the xylophone and acting out the corresponding action. Girls have been scrubbing the decks, feeling queasy, climbing the rigging and even walking the plank!

FII have been exploring Travel and sang a song about a Tuk Tuk, which enabled them to match rhythms with silly words! They have also enjoyed the Pirate Game (see FI explanation!) as well as making up their own musical patterns on the glockenspiel to musically describe rides at a theme park.

In FIII and Form IV, the girls have been reinforcing their understanding of the essential building blocks in music (musical elements) and how these can be notated in graphics. With a focus on the Solar system, they listened to music from the Planets, played a whole tone scale to create space sounds and worked in small groups to compose music and perform their own pieces which even contained ostinato and improvisation.

FV have been learning about Indian Music and the music of trailblazer Ravi Shankar; developing their understanding of non-Western music. They created group compositions; to include the features of Indian music; Tala, Raga and a musical drone.

FVI have covered a lot of ground this term; incorporating the House Music schedule, rehearsing for the Summer Concert and choosing their Leaver's Song. The girls learned to sing their own harmonies with a simple chord pattern and also worked collaboratively on small group compositions based on Hans Zimmer's "Earth" piece, where they brought their own instruments to add colour and variety to their music.

I wish them all the best as they move on to their respective schools and hope that they remember all the opportunities they have enjoyed at St Hilda's whilst finding new ways to express themselves through music in the years ahead.

HOUSE MUSIC was a great success, with the Arts Captains taking responsibility for choosing the House songs, rehearsing the girls and helping to organise and judge the auditions. Katie Fenner from 'Musicale' was our adjudicator on competition day, where we heard a high standard of instrumental and vocal solos. She thoroughly enjoyed the event and was especially impressed that the House Song lyrics had been written by the Form VI Arts Captains!



SUMMER CONCERT – A Kaleidoscope of Sound

Despite some challenging weather conditions this year, the girls delivered a most enjoyable and diverse concert around the theme of colours! Their enthusiasm and smiles brought joy to their performances.

Showtime Singers (aka “Jazzy Jelly Beans”) are an enthusiastic group and they sang beautifully in the concert with “Be cool”; a song about global warming as well as “Colours of the wind” from the Pocahontas sound track. I look forward to welcoming the FIV girls into the Senior Choir next term.

Senior Choir rose to the challenge of learning their 2 part song “True Colours” for the Summer Concert. Their hard work paid off - they performed the song with real confidence and feeling.

We also enjoyed polished instrumental performances from the Orchestra, Recorder consort, String group and Wind band. Their ongoing commitment to rehearsals has reinforced their ensemble skills; playing with expression and style.



We shall miss the valuable contributions from all the Form VI girls next term but we are cheering them onwards and upwards in their future music-making!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy summer holiday ahead!



Mid Herts Recorder Consort held a workshop in Activity Week

FOSH



As the sun sets on the current FoSH Committee's time, we would like to express our gratitude to all who have supported us in the past three years. With your help we have been able to raise over £60,000, with half of this amount to be shared between our three chosen charities and the remainder being put towards school improvements.

The addition of a school minibus in September 2024 has been a great benefit to fulfil sporting fixtures without the reliance on parent transport. Looking ahead, the school has a number of on-site facility enhancements in the pipeline which include a continued roll out of air conditioning units, new toys and furniture for the Early Years, replacement of music equipment and upgrades to sporting equipment.



Beyond the fundraising and events organisation, it has been a pleasure to get to know so many families and a privilege to help make their St Hilda's journey as special as it is for us.

We wrapped up an action-packed term at the end of last week with Wimbledon themed Friday Treats and a mini tennis competition. Congratulations to Mrs Halliday who beat Ms Nazare in a nail-biting final! Some photos [here](#).



Wishing you all a wonderful summer and, to those leaving us this year, don't forget you will always be a Friend of St Hilda's.

The 2023/24 – 2025/26 FoSH Committee.



Coming Up...

Term Dates 2026

Autumn 2026	
Term Begins	Thursday 3 rd September 2026
Half Term	Monday 19 th October – Friday 30 th October 2026
Term Ends	Friday 11 th December 2026

Spring 2027	
Term Begins	Monday 4 th January 2027
Half Term	Friday 12 th – Friday 19 th February 2027
Term Ends	Thursday 25 th March 2027

