

The Wren



Spring
2023 Vol. 3

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EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE : STEP BY STEP

Hear from our Head Teacher...

I am pleased to present the spring edition of our newsletter, tailored especially for you. I hope you enjoy reading about the exciting experiences that our students have been engaged in this term.

At our school, we have introduced a new curriculum called "Equals" (<https://equals.co.uk>) for Key Stage 3 students. This specialised curriculum is equipping our students with the necessary skills for Key Stages 4 & 5 and adult life. We have received support from Peter Imray and Mike Sisson, two of the writers of the curriculum, who have helped us to embed it across the school. The feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. "Significant with the changes happening surprisingly quickly. I'm very impressed!" said Peter Imray. We have also had other schools visit us to see the positive impact of the new curriculum.

It has been delightful to see our students gaining confidence and independence through real-life learning experiences, such as travel training, where some students have learned how to ride bikes and road safety.

Our newly formed student council has already made a significant impact in making our school community better. They have become a strong voice representing our students.

We have made several improvements to the school this term, including the refurbishment of the Food Technology room to make it accessible for all students. The local authority has also provided us with a new classroom.

As a result of ongoing staffing issues, it was challenging to close the school in rotation, and I would like to thank all parents and carers for their continued support during this difficult time. We are excited to welcome new long-term staff to our community in the new term.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Easter.



Josh
Head Teacher

Kites

Kites have been really busy this term. They have grown cress and have planted onion bulbs which they have now transferred from their inside pots to larger pots outside. They have also been playing games and learning rules as well as taking turns during our work / choose time.

During independent living they have been making and cleaning up after snacks. Some of the learners are cutting their own bagels, toasting them and then putting margarine / jam on them before cleaning their things away. Other learners prefer cereal and get the cereal, a bowl, spoon and milk out before clearing up when they've finished.



Steve
Class Teacher of Kites

Swans

The focus in Swans this term has been independence. We have been encouraging students to do as much for themselves as possible. So we've been working on making Angel Delight in food tech and toast, scrambled egg and sandwiches at snack time, washing dishes and practising independence in the toilet. We've also had lots of fun with our sensory stories, music and rhythm sessions and sensory regulation with relaxation and sensory circuits. Have a lovely Easter, from everyone in Swans.



Julie
Class Teacher of Swans

Hawks

In Hawks this term we have been focusing on becoming more independent and working on life skills. We are working on making our own snacks independently. The students are making great progress!!!! We are also embracing the new curriculum sensory play has become a firm favourite!!!! Hawks students have now joined either Emu's and Flammingo's



Louise
Class Teacher of Hawks

Emus

This term Emus completed some shopping in our local ASDA as a class and have started to go through waiting and getting ingredients for food tech in which we have been making toasties which we all have enjoyed! We also have completed sensory circuits and have started to use our new communication systems to play games with staff members and our friends in class.



James
Class Teacher of Emus

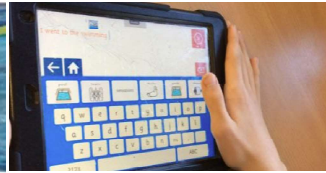
Hear from our class teachers...



We've been changing,
We've been splashing,
But we can't do it yet...
We've been kicking,
We've been listening,
But we can't do it yet...



Penguins



Chris
Class Teacher of Penguins



We've been shopping,
We've been waiting,
But we can't do it yet...
We've been walking,
We've been crossing,
But we can't do it yet...



We've been signing,
We've been communicating,
But we can't do it yet...
We've been verbalising,
We've been initiating,
But we can't do it yet...



We've been clapping,
We've been responding,
But we can't do it yet...
We've been singing,
We've been chatting,
But we can't do it yet...

We've been laughing,
we've been smiling,
But we can't do it yet...
We've been trying,
We've been inspiring,
But we can't do it yet...



A simple way to start the changing to a growth mindset, is by the use of a little word, yet. In essence, the word means a realisation that some things are worth waiting for, and those things take work, it's not always easy, but the power of this small word allows for success.

Hear from our class teachers...

Falcons

Falcons have had a busy term, we started the term with our Chinese New Year topic, and had great fun making 'Year of the Rabbit' themed artwork, exploring the components of vegetable stir fry's, and taking part in our Legend of the Chinese New Year sensory story.

Our theme for the second half of the term has been 'Spring time' we have enjoyed our 'The Little Seed' sensory story and exploring and tasting Easter Nest cakes, we also made some lovey cards for our Mums for Mother's day.



Sara
Class Teacher of Falcons

We love to get messy in Falcons, so our exploratory play sessions continue to be a highlight of our week, we also enjoyed our Music sessions and have listened to a variety of musical genres. Our Physical well-being sessions have also been lots of fun, and everyone has worked really hard trying out Sensory integration equipment.

Flamingos

Flamingos have had a great spring term regularly accessing the community as a whole class. This has given the opportunity to work on our Travel Training skills including accessing the bus with increased independence and identifying when it is safe to cross the road. This Term we have continued to immerse ourselves into The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. We have been making potions, creating spells and making ourselves disappear!

This term the class has focussed on activities to develop our skills on working together and with our peers. This has included Ball Games, Call and Response, Music and Free Play. All these lessons provide not only a great opportunity to work together but also help with our communication.



Pete
Class Teachers of Flamingos

Skylarks

Our students have been working hard this term on their independence skills including, washing up, cleaning, food preparation and road safety. Within our Equals curriculum there is opportunity to promote practice with daily life skills that helps to increase, amongst others, self-confidence, safety awareness and problem solving.



Toby
Class Teacher of Skylarks



Swans have had lots of fun on all of the different bikes outside

- Bikes without pedals that are walked along with feet strengthen limbs, improve coordination, and teach balance, improving mobility in an accessible way.
- Pedaling activates the leg muscles, building strength and muscle mass in the legs. At the same time, cycling helps create stability in the torso, and improves children's visuospatial skills and coordination'.
- Some access the bikes independently, some seek support from staff and others need a formal gown



Teaching a child life skills and working with them to overcome barriers takes time.

Swans have enhanced their routine to give the students tasks that typically would normally be done for them. Working one task at a time and letting the student seek help if needed. Swans have started with cleaning, tying shoelaces, making simple meals, etc.

Hummingbirds

In Hummingbirds we have spent a lot of time outdoors! We have started growing lots of new fruits and vegetables, both in school and at our allotment. We have got onions, garlic, potatoes, rhubarb, broad beans, spring onions, and even some flowers. We have visited the garden centre to choose our seeds and will be going back again to buy more. We have also been to Stanwick lakes, as part of a new monthly opportunity. For our first visit, we had fun exploring and racing on the assault course, but we will also be bird watching, bug hunting, flower spotting, and collecting willow for the park. Our Hazard alley trip has moved to the summer term, which we are very excited for. This term, we started our Jungle book story; we have had great fun learning the story and the songs, as well as creating a lot of jungle art. Finally, we have successfully chosen, planned and prepared our first cooked lunch as a group. Which will now be a weekly event.



Anna

Class Teachers of Hummingbirds

Swifts

Swifts theme this term has been Chinese New Year and we have enjoyed exploring noodles in Food tech, finding out which animal we were for the year of our births and getting creative making our masks and lanterns. Our sensory Story was 'the Seven Chinese sisters' and we made our dragon for the story. We enjoy exploring in therapies and sharing play together. We had a visit from the Gangsta Granny and a dinosaur on world book day. Next term our theme is festivals and we are excited about using our new wheelchair swing. Thank you for your ongoing support, Lorraine and team.



Lorraine

Class Teacher of Swifts

Sparrows

This term, Sparrows have improved their play skills during free play as well as during structured play. The students have become better communicators by using PECS, communication boards or communication books. All of the students practiced using their schedules to inform them of what is happening throughout the day. Call and response, interoception, sensory circuits and sensory stories have been enjoyed by all of us. We have also worked on developing more awareness of our sense



Mihaela

Class Teacher of Sparrows



Flamingos have had lots of fun exploring the local community, especially Kettering's Pleasure Park. Public playgrounds provide many learning opportunities through different types of play. Outdoor play allows; physical, social, emotional, imaginative and cognitive development. Exercise improves health and well-being while the safe environment encourages independence.



The students enjoyed celebrating World Book Day with their teachers and friends. They were encouraged to delve into the pleasures of books by providing them with the opportunity to explore by imaginative play and creative thinking



Flamingos have carried out lots of different creative activities this term. As well as being a fun, these activities can help with the students coordination skills and mobility in general. Another benefit is that these activities can easily help express their feelings and emotions.



A lot of our students use Communication Boards - By offering images as an alternative for spoken language, communication boards are more inclusive of those who might not be able to verbalise their thoughts and can help others understand the needs and thoughts of nonspeaking or minimally speaking individuals.

Wellbeing Tip

Link: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/physical-activity-and-your-mental-health/about-physical-activity/>

There are many studies that show physical activity can improve your mental health and wellbeing. A little extra activity every day can improve your quality of sleep, increase your self-esteem and could reduce your risk of depression. For more information from Mind, on how you can stay active follow the link or scan the QR Code.



The Local Offer and SNIX

Some of you may know of The Local Offer, which is a central directory of everything available in Northamptonshire to support you and your family. If you'd like to view the local offer, follow this link.

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/SEND/local-offer/Pages/what's-on.aspx>



You may have heard of SNIX, but if not here is a little information for you to read. The Special Needs Index (SNIX) is an electronic database of information about young people aged 0 to 25 who have a learning or physical disability or sensory impairment and who live in Northamptonshire. The SNIX database helps us to plan services for children with special educational needs and disabilities. We compile a newsletter for all those registered with SNIX which provides information about special educational needs and disability services, resources, training, early years, groups, clubs and activities on a regular basis.

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/SEND/send-support-for-children/Pages/special-needs-index.aspx>



David Doyle
Family Support Worker

David



A trip to the supermarket can provide a great opportunity for a sensory experience. There's so much going on with lights, colours, sounds and textures. Hummingbirds, as always, have been focusing on supporting independence and important life skills that the students will need for their future.

Other important life skills include:



Hummingbirds learn how to look after themselves, their school and become familiar with concepts such as teamwork and routine during tasks throughout their day. These tasks include: washing up, making simple meals, drinks, packing away shopping and many more. Our aim is to improve self-worth and encourage independence for the future. We all like the feeling that we can help!

Sensory

The Sensory provision have had a great time over the Spring term with our Chinese New Year topic, and we had lots of fun exploring traditional Chinese foods, making crafts and taking part in our sensory stories. Our second theme has been 'Spring time' and we have enjoyed a sensory story about a little seed, and made some fantastic crafts for Valentine's day, and Mother's day and making Easter nest cakes in sensory cooking has been very popular!

We have been developing our play, independence and travel training skills within school and enjoy opportunities to mix with our peers in wider school activities.

There have been some lovely whole school events this term, we had a lot of fun dressing up and sharing stories for world book day and the Sensory Provision took the lead for our Comic relief activities and ran a Red nose hunt for the rest of the school, which was lots of fun, congratulations to Emu's class for winning the hunt!

We have lots of exciting things planned for the Summer term and look forward to sharing them with you in the next edition of The Wren!



Sara
Assistant Head

Collaborative

This term in the Collaborative department we have continued with our off-site visits including, Travel Training in our local area, shopping, Horse Riding, swimming, allotment, Stanwick Lakes and Chester House. We are seeing more engagement from our students with the Equals based curriculum being established over the first two terms and they are taking some ownership about their learning. Looking ahead to the events of the Summer Term we have our annual visit to Wicksteed Park sponsored by the Rotary Club and our MayDay celebration at school as well as our regular curriculum visits.



Toby
Assistant Head

Structured

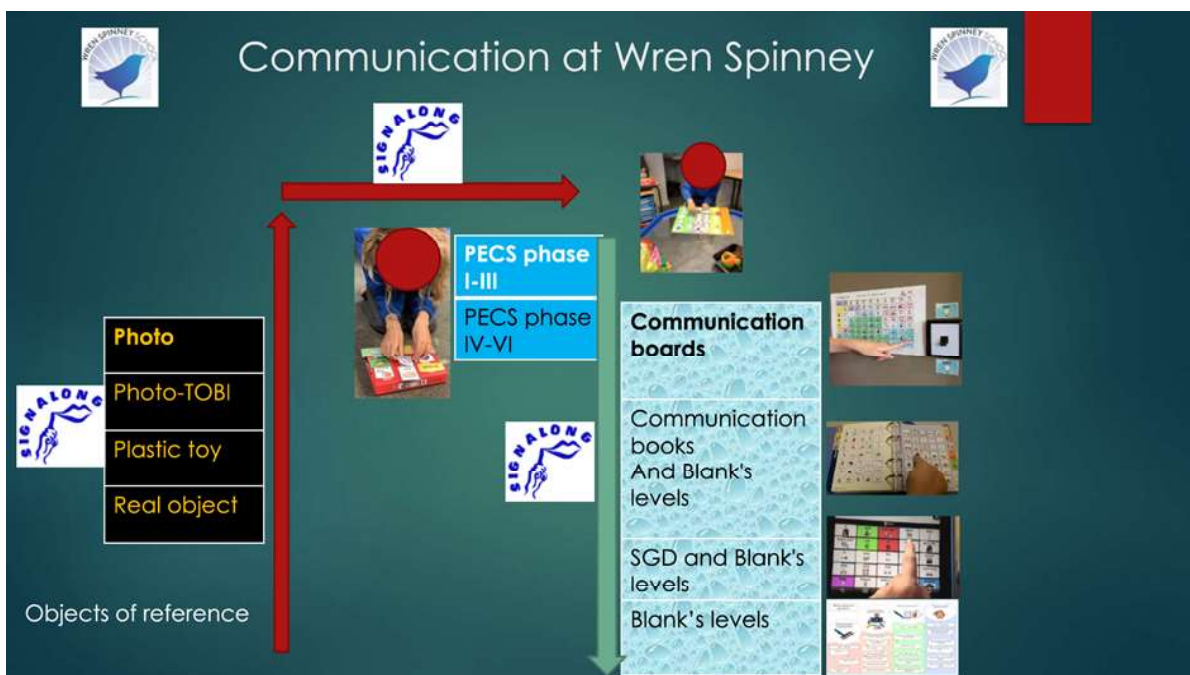
In the Structured provision, the students have focused on using their schedules effectively; they continued to develop their communication and social skills through play. We have seen massive improvements in the way that students are able to interact with a wider variety of objects and people. Their attention span and their self-regulation and co-regulation skills have also increased.

Interoception sessions, designed by our OT, have had lots of success. The students have engaged with these activities really well, and some of the students were able to use the concepts learnt during these sessions in other situations during their school day. Well done everyone! You have all worked extremely hard this term!

Communication

This term, with the support from our Speech and Language therapist (Charlotte), we have embarked on an exciting journey of implementing communication boards and communication books.

This is our Communication Journey:



Mihaela
Assistant Head



Graiden playing and taking turns in a game



Charlie preparing his snack and then clearing up after himself & Mason slicing and toasting his bagel



Maja preparing pots for onion bulbs and watering them as we; as Eleni watering the onion bulbs.

Signing Choir

It has been a pleasure to lead signing choir this term.
It has been fantastic to see how engaged and enthusiastic the students are.



Louise
Class Teacher of Hawks

We are learning the signs for 'circle of life' and George Ezra's 'Green Green Grass'.
You can view our 'Signalong - Word of The Week' on the school website: www.wrenspinney.co.uk

We would like to invite all parents to take part in our 'Sign Along Workshop' on May 9th between 13:20-14:20 - For more information, please contact the office.

There has been some amazing progress in phonics this term. Not only have phonics skills improved, but many students I work with have also shown that they have gained confidence in their own ability.

The programme we use is called Sounds Write, so I thought I would tell you a little about how this programme differs from other phonics programmes:
Most phonics programmes teach letters/sounds in isolation, before starting to spell/build words. With Sounds Write, letters/sounds are first introduced in a word, as letters in isolation do not have much meaning.

There are no pictures and words associated with specific sounds, eg, G for girl. Teaching a word, picture, letter formation and sound, doubles the amount of information to remember for each letter, so it is kept to just 2 pieces of information.

The lessons and the way they taught are very structured and scripted. This means that everyone that is trained to teach Sounds Write, delivers it in exactly the same way to ensure continuity and avoid confusion for students.



Lucy
Level 4 Teaching Assistant

We would like to invite all parents to take part in our 'Phonics Workshop' on May 10th between 13:20-14:20 - For more information, please contact the office.



Falcons have happily taken part in lots of different celebrations this year, including: World Book Day, Mother's Day, Easter, Valentine's Day, Red Nose Day and Pancake Day! The holidays are all about celebrating the values that bring us together in life, such as our friends and family. These important connections can bring us unity through togetherness, generosity, and gratitude.



Sensory play is a key part of a Falcons day. The students benefit from sensory activities in several ways, as it can help with: Stimulating the brain, creating neural pathways and improving sensory processing systems. Improving social skills such as communication and co-operation. Improving co-ordination, as well as fine and gross motor skills. Also, as you can see from the photos... it's very enjoyable.



Wren Spinney School Council convened for the first time this year. And what better way to start our first meeting than with a vote for our World Book Day books?

We introduced ourselves and our classes.

Please see the update from below from Jak in Skylarks, a member of the school council. We read the books to decide which book was good. We voted for our favourites. I liked The Story of the Little Mole who Knew it was None of his Business, The Gorilla and Superworm.

For World Book Day:

**Skylarks, Penguins, Kites and Hummingbirds read The Story of the Little Mole who Knew it was None of his Business and The Gorilla
Swifts, Falcons and Hawks read Peace at Last
Swans, Emus, Sparrows and Flamingos read Superworm.**

Next time we will talk about the playground. A lot needs doing. Probably the new swing will be finished. The big tree has been cut down too, I would like it back for some shade on the playground because it is nearly summer.

As the school nurse I am pleased to report that this last term has been busy for the students at Wren Spinney. We had a visit from the dentist who provided dental check-ups and care for some during the school day.

Also, some of our year groups received teenage booster vaccinations as part of the School Age Immunisation Schedule. This is an important part of the healthy child programme that the Special School Nursing Team support across our county.

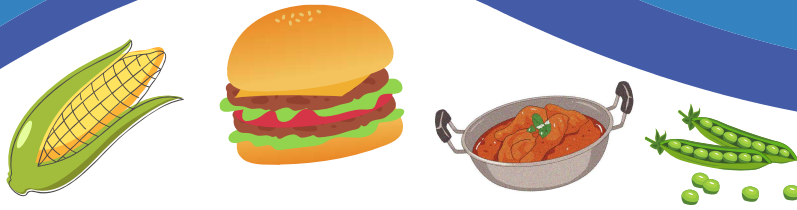
In addition, for our older students we had a healthy eating interactive session including a hands-on game of guessing how many sugar cubes in popular drinks such as regular coke and McDonald's milkshakes.

Students also had the opportunity to see what happens when you put a 1 pence coin in regular coke these were fun activities that helped us all understand the importance of making healthy food and drink choices. It's been a great term for promoting good health and well-being among the students at Wren Spinney.



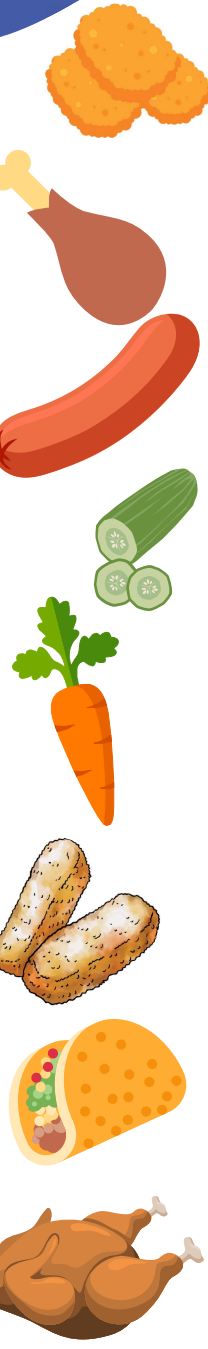
Annette Robinson - Senior Special School Nurse
Working Hours: Monday to Friday 09:00 -15:00
Mobile: 0792 713 1839

Celebrations



WEEK ONE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MAIN	Chicken Nuggets & Herby Diced Potatoes	Italian Chicken & Mixed Rice	Sausage, Mashed Potato & Yorkshire Pudding	Spaghetti served with Beef Dolognaise	Fish Fingers, Chips
VEGETARIAN	Veggie Nuggets Herby Diced Potatoes	Beany Tomato Ragu & Mixed Rice	Quorn Roast Vegetable Sausage, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy	Vegetable Sausage Pasta Bake	Cheese & Tomato Pizza, Chips
VEGETABLES	Carrot & Cucumber Mixed Vegetables	Garden Peas Carrots	Cauliflower Seasonal Greens	Green Beans Sweetcorn	Baked Beans Peas
SANDWICHES, JACKETS,	Freshly Made Sandwich with Cheddar, Tuna Mayonnaise or Ham Freshly Baked Jacket Potato with Tuna & Mayonnaise, Grated Cheese or Baked Beans				
DESSERT	Oat & Raisin Cookie	Chocolate Sponge with Chocolate Sauce	Jelly	Vanilla Blondie	Ice-cream pot
WEEK TWO	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MAIN	Chicken & Sweetcorn Pizza Daguette, Herby Diced Potatoes	Beef Burger & Homemade Potato Wedges	Roast Chicken, Roast Potatoes & Gravy	Chicken Tikka Curry & Mixed Rice	Fish Cake, Chips
VEGETARIAN	Rainbow Pizza, Herby Diced Potatoes	Veggie Burger & Potato Wedges	Vegetable Sausage, Roast Potatoes & Gravy	Chinese Vegetable Curry & Mixed Rice	Cheese & Onion Pastry Roll & Potato Wedges
VEGETABLES	Sweetcorn, Peas	Green Beans Cauliflower	Carrots Savoy Cabbage	Mixed Vegetables Salad	Baked Beans Peas
SANDWICHES, JACKETS,	Freshly Made Sandwich with Cheddar, Tuna Mayonnaise or Ham Freshly Baked Jacket Potato with Tuna & Mayonnaise, Grated Cheese or Baked Beans				
DESSERT	Flapjack	Chocolate Muffin	Jelly & Mandarins	Shortbread	Chocolate Ice-Cream
WEEK THREE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MAIN	Chicken Burger & Herby Diced Potatoes	Pork Hot Dog & Baked Potato Wedges	Savory Mince, Mashed Potatoes & Yorkshire Pudding	Chicken Tomato Pasla Bake	Fish Fingers, Chips
VEGETARIAN	Veggie Mince Chilli Taco	Veggie Hot Dog & Baked Potato Wedges	Vegetable Sausage, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy	Macaroni Cheese	Cheesy Bean Pitta Pockets, Chips
VEGETABLES	Mixed Vegetables Salad	Peas, Sweetcorn	Spring Greens Cauliflower	Green Beans Carrots	Baked Beans Garden Peas
SANDWICHES, JACKETS,	Freshly Made Sandwich with Cheddar, Tuna Mayonnaise or Ham Freshly Baked Jacket Potato with Tuna & Mayonnaise, Grated Cheese or Baked Beans				
DESSERT	Oaty Biscuit	Brownie	Jelly	Apple Crumble & Custard	Ice-Cream Pot

Reminder - Please ensure that you have booked your child's school dinner through Parent Pay. Parents having problems with logging in please contact the school via email office@wrenspinney.co.uk where we will be able to help you.





Nathan, our photographer, has been around our school and taken pictures of our new building and the brand-new swing which we are all very excited about. Coming into the summer Nathan will be looking for more opportunities for showing off any exciting things that happen.



Emu's Class have been encouraging the student to participate in tasks that typically would normally be done for them - They have especially enjoyed making their own snack



The UK government have announced that Monday 8 May 2023 will be an official, extra bank holiday to mark King Charles III's coronation

TERM 5

TRAINING DAY	Monday 17 th April
Re-open to pupils	Tuesday 18 th April
BANK HOLIDAY	Monday 1 st May
School Closes	Friday 26 th May

TERM 6

Re-Open to Pupils	Monday 5 th June
School Closes	Thursday 27 th July



TRAINING DAYS — SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED TO PUPILS