

The Wren



Summer 2025

Edition



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EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE : STEP BY STEP



Part of Creating Tomorrow Trust



Headteacher Letter:

Joshua Gershwin-Williams
Headteacher



Dear Wren Spinney School Community,

As we close the door on another extraordinary year, I want to take a moment to reflect on all we have achieved together and to thank you, our families, staff, governors, and wider community, for your ongoing support, care, and commitment.

This term has been filled with learning, celebration, and connection. From our incredible May Day celebrations, Beach Day, and visits from the Bubble Lady, Mini Donkeys and Bertie the Therapy Dog to Wicksteed Park's Kids Day Out, our students have been at the heart of every moment, smiling, exploring, and thriving.



We are also incredibly proud of our continued work with Equals and the curriculum we've developed to support our learners. This term, we've welcomed visitors from across the country and the world, including Singapore and the Cayman Islands, who've come to see our approach in action.

Behind the scenes, there's been lots of development too. We've opened our new Parrots classroom, completed the first phase of our bathroom refurbishment, and with generous support from Tilia Homes, we've creating a new outdoor sensory learning space. Over the summer, work will continue, including a full refurbishment of Hummingbirds, new outdoor courtyards, and significant investment in our school roof.

This year hasn't been without its challenges, especially regarding the uncertainty caused by the removal of additional funding by the local authority. We've worked hard to ensure our students remain safe, supported, and successful. I am grateful to our MP Rosie Wrighting, our local councillors, and all of you who have stood with us to make our voices heard.



Finally, thank you to our Student Council, who've led the way with bake sales, fundraising, and listening to their peers. Your voice matters, and we're excited for what next year will bring.



Wren Spinney is more than just a school, it's a family. None of this would be possible without the incredible teamwork, and shared belief in our young people. I hope you all enjoy a restful, joyful summer, and I look forward to welcoming you back in September for another year of progress and possibility.



MP/Mayor/ Cllr Visits

Joshua Gershwin-Williams
Headteacher



This term, Wren Spinney School proudly welcomed a group of distinguished visitors, including Rosie Wrighting MP, Cllr Byatt, Cllr Geary, Cllr Prentice, Cllr Watts and the Mayor of Kettering.

Their visit marked a significant opportunity to showcase the remarkable work of our school community and to advocate for the needs and rights of our pupils.



Our guests spent time touring the school, visiting classrooms, and speaking with staff and students about the unique challenges and joys of providing education. They observed first-hand our Equals-based curriculum in action.



The visitors expressed admiration for the dedication of our staff, the calm and purposeful atmosphere of the school, and the confidence and happiness of our learners. Feedback from the visit was overwhelmingly positive, and we are incredibly grateful for their time and support.

EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE
: STEP BY STEP



Deputy Headteacher Update:

Mike Tebbutt
Deputy Headteacher



Equals Development Days



Wren Spinney is a Special school for pupils with PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities), CLN (Complex Learning Needs) and SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties). Pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties can have the following difficulties below (devised by Imray and Colley, 2017). Pupils with Complex Learning Needs with struggle with the majority of/if not all the Difficulties.

- Consistently and over time working at or below the starting levels of the National Curriculum
- Difficulties with communication
- Difficulties with concentration and attention
- Difficulties with abstract concepts
- Difficulties with short- and long-term memory
- Difficulties with sequential memory
- Limited working memory
- Poor general knowledge
- Difficulties with problem solving
- Difficulties with generalising understanding.

Our children are working at a cognitive level below 4 years old and in many cases way below this age. This is why our curriculum is different and not just a differentiated form of the National Curriculum.

Equals (<https://equals.co.uk/>) have developed a specialised curriculum for children with PMLD, SLD and Complex needs. Wren have worked with Equals and schools that have equals based curriculum to develop its own curriculum over the last 3 years – which is itself now Equals based.

Equals have developed its relationship with Wren and this year we have been supporting Equals by running ‘**Development Days**’ promoting the specialised Curriculum. At Wren we use the Pre-formal, Informal and Semi-formal Curriculum.

The Development days enable visitors to understand what Equals has meant for the pupils at Wren and how we have introduced it into our school by utilising Equals principles and schemes of work

- Sensory Provision – Pre-formal & Informal
- Structured Provision – Informal Curriculum
- Collaborative Provision – Semi-formal

We explain our curriculum overview including:

- Baselining data & (post-Wren) Destinations
- Pupil Led Learning which leads into our Planning & Sequencing
- EHCP Outcomes & Assessment (Pupil Paperwork)
- Quality Assurance

This is backed up by school tours showing our curriculum in action and then complimented by discussion about communication, play and behaviour & engagement.

Pre-Formal Curriculum	Informal Curriculum	Semi-Formal Curriculum
PMLD	Complex SLD, SLD/Autism	SLD, SLD/Autism
Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities	Working consistently and over time at the most complex end of the SLD spectrum	Working consistently and over time at or below the earliest reaches of the NC
➔	↔	↔



Deputy Headteacher Update:

Mike Tebbutt
Deputy Headteacher



Development Day Visitors



We have hosted 7 development days this year with visitors from our own Trust (Creating Tomorrow Partnership), local schools, schools across the country and more recently international visitors!

As there is a growth nationally in Special Educational Needs, also in its complexity and presentation, interest in the Equals curriculum has grown. The interest in these specialised curricula has now included overseas schools.

Singapore

At the start of June, a party of 16 Teachers, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Education officials and Special educational consultants visited the UK from Singapore. They visited 5 of the 7 Equals Exemplar schools with one day spent at Wren Spinney. This was an interesting day for all, as we learnt about how the practices of schools are similar and different in another country.



We received positive feedback from the day and enjoyed showing what our pupils are able to do and how this is supported by the routines and processes found in the Equals curriculum

Caymen Islands



In July we had 4 visitors from the Lighthouse School (and Education Ministry) based in the Caymen Islands. Again, this visit was part of a visit to 3 Equals schools to view the curriculum in action.

Outreach

We have also supported schools following Development days, this has included visits to other schools as well as providing online training.



Sensory Provision Summer Update:

Sara Lambert
Assistant Headteacher



The Sensory Provision have had a wonderful summer term, we have been enjoying our 'Showtime' Theme, with some fabulous Sensory stories, including a trip to the Circus and sweeping the board at an awards ceremony! We have explored different textures and materials in creativity making some fabulous 'Showtime' themed artwork.

We all look forward to weekly sessions with Paul the music man, and the students have all shown great engagement and anticipation and have played with and explored a variety of instruments.



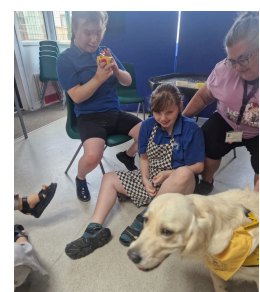
Call and response and Attention Autism session have been a lot of fun this term, especially '5 current buns' and Waterfalls.

Sensory students have accessed offsite opportunities such as Horse Riding, Swimming and trips to the local park.



We enjoyed Maypole and country dancing and celebrating our May Kings and Queens at May Day. Another highlight for us this term was the beach play day, where we all had a fabulous time exploring the big sand pit, paddling pools, and having water fights.

We have had a visit from the Donkeys and enjoyed a Bubble workshop out on the playground and have also taken part in a Barefoot walk and had fun using the playground equipment, the Roundabout and Swing are firm favourites!



We have been lucky enough this term to have Bertie the Therapy dog come to spend time in classes and we have had some lovely interactions between Bertie and the students.

We are excited about the new academic year and we look forward to keeping you all updated on our adventures next term.

Have a wonderful summer holiday.



Collaborative Provision Summer Update:

Toby Widdicombe
Assistant Headteacher

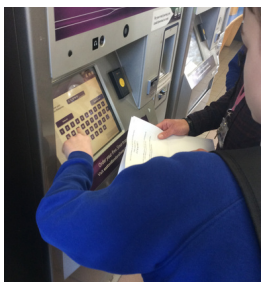


This Summer term our Collaborative classes continue to work hard on their independence skills while being off site on educational visits. We have been out Horse Riding, Swimming, Shopping, Travel Training, Stanwick Lakes, Wicksteed Park, using Public Buses, Teamwork Trust, Cash and Carry for tuck shop shopping, Isebrook Animal Care, Trout fishing and The Green Patch!

The Collaborative Department got to enjoy Wicksteed Park Kids Day Out! Lunch was generously provided by the Kettering Rotary Club. We decided to get there early this year and we were all able to make as much use of our time and get on most rides, sometimes twice!! It was a great day, everyone enjoyed themselves. Especially with the lovely weather!



Some of our students have been on the train from Kettering to Leicester to visit the New Walk Museum and had a wonderful time. They enjoyed a picnic lunch in the local park



We have also been using a VR headset borrowed from our Creating Tomorrow Trust College. The students have been enjoying the new experience.

There has been so much progress made across the provision and we are all so proud of the efforts our students put in each day. From the Collaborative Provision we hope you have an amazing Summer and we will see you in September!



Structured Provision Summer Update:

Mihaela Shoebridge
Assistant Headteacher



The students in the Structured Provision had a very busy summer term.

We welcomed our visitors from Singapore, as well as the MP for Kettering and local authority Councillors, when we showcased our play skills both in our classrooms and in the playground. Our beach day has been very successful with lots of engagement and enjoyment from our students. The sand and water have been ideal in the beautiful sunny weather!



The 'Bubble Lady' and the visits from the two mini-donkeys were also very much appreciated by our students. The donkeys were very sweet. They enjoyed having their fur brushed by our students and loved lots of gentle strokes.

The giant bubbles have captivated everyone, including the adults!



The time of the year has once again arrived where we need to say goodbye to our leavers, and to wish them the very best for their future.



On behalf of the Structured Provision, I wish you all a lovely summer holiday and we can't wait to see you back in September, ready for another busy year!



Pastoral Summer Update:

Daniel Mulchrone

Assistant Headteacher & SENCo



Meet the Pastoral Team!



Ceri Thomas

Family Support Worker

Leads on EHAs, Child in Need meetings and parental support



Daniel Mulchrone

Assistant Head (SENCo)

Pastoral lead, with oversight of EHCP reviews, external professionals and behaviour support



Thea Smith

Wellbeing Officer

Leads on student welfare, advocacy, trained ELSA, and supports with CiC

School Nurse Information

Wren Spinney's school nurse is Kristy Standish, please contact the pastoral team if you need to talk to the school nurse.

School nurses are vital in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people, acting as a link between school, home, and the community. They provide a range of services, including confidential advice, care, treatment and are vital in ensuring up to date care plans are in place.

Attendance information

If your son or daughter is absent from school, please contact the school office before 9:00am on the first day of any absence by telephoning 01536 481939. You will have the option to leave a voicemail or speak to the school office.

Relationship Plans

These outline how Wren Spinney supports your son or daughter throughout the day. If you have any queries, please ask your child's class teacher to see their relationship plan. This is a collaborative document written and used by school but should be informed with your knowledge, as experts in your child.

Useful Contacts: - School is closed over the holidays but here are some useful contacts if you have any major concerns:

MASH - If you are worried or concerned about something that has happened to you, a friend or someone you know, please call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0300 126 7000.

NSPCC - If you have any concerns about a child. You can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 (10am-4pm Monday to Friday), emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk or via their website. www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline - telephone number is 0800 1111



☀️ Supporting Well-being Over the Summer Holidays ☀️

The summer holidays are a wonderful time to rest, recharge, and enjoy some quality time together – but we also know that long breaks can sometimes feel challenging, especially when routines change.

🕒 Keep a Simple Routine

While it's great to relax, many children and young people with additional needs thrive on structure. A visual calendar or daily timetable can help ease anxiety and provide a sense of security. Try to include time for meals, activities, rest, and quiet time.

🌿 Get Outside (When You Can!)

Nature can be incredibly calming and restorative. Whether it's a trip to the park, a garden picnic, or even cloud-watching in the backyard, time outside supports emotional and physical well-being.

🎨 Choose Joyful Activities

Summer is the perfect time to revisit favourite hobbies or try new sensory-friendly activities. From baking and crafting to music and water play, doing things that spark joy can lift everyone's mood. On our class dojo there are lots of events that are happening over the school holidays.

❤️ Be Kind to Yourself

Caring for a child with additional needs can be demanding. Remember to look after yourself too. It's okay to ask for help, take breaks, and do things that bring you joy.

🎉 Celebrating Our Student Council!

This year, our amazing Student Council has been working hard to make sure the voices of all our students are heard – and to help make our school an even better place to be.

We're so proud of everything they've achieved, and we'd love to share just a few highlights. Our Student Council helped organise and run our bake sales this term. Not only were they a delicious success, but the events also raised money for playground equipment. From setting up the stalls to handling money and greeting customers, the students showed incredible teamwork and responsibility. One of the Student Council's most important roles is to represent their peers. This year, they've gathered feedback from our students about what they enjoy at school, what could be improved, and ideas for the future. Their discussions with staff have helped shape some exciting plans and ensure every voice is valued. Even though the summer holidays are just around the corner, our Student Council is already thinking ahead! They've started planning new events and ideas for the next school year.





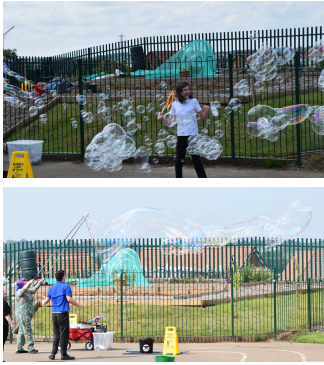
Fit & Fun Day 🏃

On the 21st May 2025, we had our Fit and Fun Day in school encouraging our students take part in something physical throughout the day. We had lots of activities ranging from our sensory circuits to help get us set up for the day. To having thrilling games of Boccia outside on the playground! But not only that we also completed some physical activities in class as well such as our physio, body awareness songs like Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes to the Hokey Cokey!



The Bubble Lady 🫧

The visit from the Bubble Lady to the playground was a magical experience for our students. As she began creating an array of vibrant, shimmering bubbles, the children's faces lit up with pure joy and wonder. The bubbles, large and small, floated gracefully through the air, inviting the children to chase and pop them. The staff members enjoyed getting involved and created some amazing, giant bubbles for their students to explore. This delightful activity not only provided sensory delight but also fostered a sense of community and happiness among the children. It was a heartwarming sight to see the playground filled with laughter and excitement, making it a day to remember for everyone involved.



Mini Donkey Visit 🐴

The visit from the Mini Donkeys was an enchanting experience for the children. As the gentle, adorable animals trotted into the playground, the children showed enjoyment and curiosity. The donkeys, with their soft fur and friendly demeanour, provided a unique and calming presence. The children eagerly approached, petting and feeding the donkeys, their faces glowing with happiness. The interaction with the mini donkeys offered not only a therapeutic benefit but also a wonderful opportunity for the children to connect with animals in a safe and supportive environment. The visit created a joyful and memorable day, filled with laughter, and smiles.



Beach Day 🏖️

We had our annual Beach Day in June where the playground became a big beach scene, with a giant sand pit, paddling pools and sprinklers, as well as summer fayre style games. Thankfully it was a nice sunny day and the students all had a brilliant time exploring the different environment!



Wicksteed Kids Day Out 🎠

The Collaborative Department got out to Wicksteed Park as well, getting there early this year and we were all able to make as much use of the time and get on most rides, sometimes twice!! It was a great day, weather was just right and everyone enjoyed the lunch provided generously by the Kettering Rotary Club.



May Day 🎈

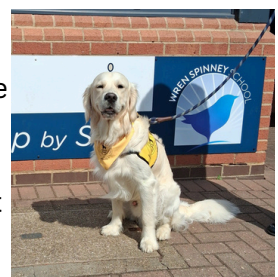
It was lovely to see so many parents, carers and family members joining us for May Day. The sun was shining and everyone had wonderful time celebrating our May Kings and Queens who wore some amazingly creative crowns! We enjoyed some fabulous Maypole and Country dancing and a lovely performance from the Signing Choir. We hope to see you all again for next years celebrations



Bertie the Therapy Dog 🐕

Bertie came to spend time with our students as part of our ongoing focus on well-being and emotional support. With his calm nature and gentle wagging tail, Bertie quickly became a favourite among students and staff alike.

Many of our students had the chance to meet, stroke, or simply sit near Bertie. His quiet presence helped create a soothing atmosphere, particularly for students who sometimes find school environments overwhelming. Whether in small group sessions or individual visits, Bertie brought a sense of calm wherever he went. For some of our students, interacting with Bertie made it easier to express themselves. Staff noted that students who spent time with Bertie often appeared more relaxed, focused, and happy afterwards. For some, it was a huge step just to sit near him, while others showed great pride in brushing him or leading him gently on his lead. We are hoping to welcome Bertie back in September!





Summer Site Update:

Laura Patey-Smith
Operations Manager



Wow and just like that another year has gone by, it doesn't seem that long ago when I was updating you all at Easter.

This year has been a whirlwind of achievements, I honestly do not know where to start.

We successfully opened our new classroom, which has been named Parrots and the team have made it look fabulous, with new display boards and beautiful artwork.

Then we have started our bathroom project, having replaced 5 bathrooms around the school, creating a modern space for our students. This project will continue into the coming year, so watch this space for more updates.



Thanks to Tilia Homes we have been able to create a secure outdoor learning space, where our students can explore more skills like making fairy houses, planting and looking after a sensory garden and so much more. Tilia kindly also replaced some of our fencing at the same time, as well as giving us a very generous donation.



Introduced you all to the Parent Portal on Arbor!

What is to come for us.... Well, we have some very exciting projects starting over the summer and into October Half term.

The remaining 3 courtyards will be installed, giving our swifts and flamingos classroom a larger outdoor space.

Hummingbirds class will have a full makeover including a new kitchenette and a wall will be removed to give them more space.



But the really exciting news..... We have been working with the central team and have now managed to secure funding to replace 3 sections of our roof. As some of you will know we have been looking at options for quite some time. This work will commence over the summer, and we hope to be finished by October Half Term.





Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the umbrella that sits above everything that we do at Wren Spinney School.



Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
 - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- (Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) paragraph 3)

What we do at Wren Spinney for Safeguarding

- We have a team of DSLs who oversee and take part in all Safeguarding functions
- We have a Single Central Record (series of checks) as part of our Safer Recruitment Process
- All staff take part in Safeguarding Induction & Inset. Including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- A Safeguarding Programme. Including regular Safeguarding training and updates for staff and a weekly safeguarding update
- A Safeguarding & Behaviour Tracker
- A recording system called MyConcern
- A way for staff to report staff concerns, called Confide (part of MyConcern)
- Using pupil voice (including consent as part of SoSafe)



Online Safety

The NSPCC have useful information related to online safety, including for children with SEND. Please follow the link for more information [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)