



With friendship, trust and kindness, we fly!



The Swallowtail Federation

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January 2026 Newsletter

Message from the Executive Head

Dear families,

Happy New Year to you all!

We certainly had an eventful start, with the snow and ice. Thank you for all your support to ensure we managed those few days safely.

A warm welcome to Romany Womack who has joined the team at Catfield as our new EYFS teacher. We also see Emma Smithson stepping up to senior teacher, who is already showing to be an incredible leader in her new role.

This term is shorter than the last but with no less to fit in. Spring term is often when we find children really fly with their learning and make significant progress. At the end of the term teachers in our key stage 1 and key stage 2 classes will be writing your child's report which you will receive on the 1st May. The idea behind this is that targets will be set for child to work on in the Summer term. EYFS reports are sent out later in the summer term, in line with statutory guidance.

Kind Regards

Natalie Butcher, Executive Head, The Swallowtail Federation

Every day in school counts...



and every minute counts...



Attendance YTD Catfield Primary Academy:

Lions: 94.47%

Cheetahs: 92.84%

Panthers: 94.35%

Well done Lions!

Did You Know?

One full school year at 90% attendance is the equivalent of 4 weeks of learning missed!

Over 5 years of school, this adds up to half a school year missed.

This is known as persistent absence.



We are sensitive to the needs of the child and are there to help all pupils. If you are worried about your child's attendance, give the school a call, asking for Miss Blake.

You can also contact the Healthy Child Service team by calling Just One Number on [0300 300 0123](tel:03003000123) or texting Parentline on 07520 631590. Opening hours are 8am-6pm Monday-Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Message from Mrs Smithson

Dear families,

Welcome back!

Hope you all had a lovely Christmas, although it feels like many weeks ago now, as we have fully immersed ourselves in this brand new term, which is certainly a busy one!

First of all, a massive thank you for all your kind contributions of toys and books for our breakfast club and wet playtimes. I know the children are grateful, especially given the current weather. At this point because we have had so many donations, we are at full capacity and do not require anymore, thank you for your support.

This term we have much to look forward to.

On Friday 30th January, there will be a non-uniform day with a suggested £1 donation please.

On Thursday 12th February, we are having a Valentines disco from 3.20-4.20pm. This is open to all the children, however can we kindly request that parents attend with any pre-school children. Tickets are £3 and include a drink and snack.

Also, for Valentines we have a Valentines bundle that will replace the cake raffle that week.

We are all looking forward to our Federation day on Friday 6th February, where our three schools will all gather together at Sutton Infant Academy school to celebrate NSPCC number day. We have many fun number-based activities planned and hope to see as many children dressing up following the theme of numbers!

Finally, our Key Stage 2 choir are really looking forward to performing as part of Young voices at the O2, London on the 23rd February. As we have so few weeks now left to practise, can you please encourage your child to practise at home using the Young voices login.

Please do feel free to contact me directly on my email address if there is anything I can help you with: esmithson2crp@nsix.org.uk

Thank you
Mrs Smithson

Revised diary dates will be sent out on Monday 26th January

This Month's Curriculum Focus: English

The **Strong Foundations Framework** highlight the significance of **reading, writing, and maths**. It emphasises on what high-quality teaching looks like in the early years and Key Stage 1, and it helps schools make sure every child builds secure, confident skills from the beginning of their schooling journey. Children who develop strong early foundations are more likely to: feel confident in reading, writing, and maths, maintain the curriculum as it becomes more challenging, developing an enjoyment for learning, rooted in a secure understanding and prevent gaps widening.

Securing strong foundations for all pupils



Word reading



Spelling



Handwriting



Early mathematics



High-quality interactions

A deeper look into the application of Securing Strong Foundations to English:

Word reading	<p>Systematic, Synthetic Phonics (SSP) Little Wandle is a rigorous, well-sequenced phonics programme. Children are taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in clear progression. Daily phonics takes place, with opportunities to apply new knowledge in reading and writing.</p> <p>Decoding Accuracy Children learn to blend sounds and read words.</p> <p>Practice Through Decodable Texts Reading books match taught phonics. Decodable books allow children to practise taught GPCs and build confidence. Rapid Identification of children requiring additional intervention Regular assessment identifies children who need additional support. Interventions: Keep Up and Catch Up are delivered in line with our phonics scheme. Language and Vocabulary as Supporting Foundations Oral language development, vocabulary exposure and comprehension foundations</p>
Spelling	<p>Spelling is taught through systematic synthetic phonics Children learn to segment words into phonemes and record these as graphemes. Spelling instruction follows the Little Wandle Spelling progression. Common Exception Words are taught explicitly. Sequencing matters Children are not expected to spell words containing GPCs they have not yet been taught. Rapid Identification of children requiring additional intervention Early assessment is essential to identify children who need extra support through intervention.</p>
Handwriting	<p>Letter formation including orientation and size is taught rigorously. Children are supporting in developing the correct pencil grip; Nip, Flip, Grip has been implemented to support this. Children are taught to leave spaces between words.</p>

Abby Blake

English Subject Leader