



# LLS News

10/10/2025



Dear families

It was lovely to welcome our new families to our Induction Session last week.

Next week LOLER sling testing will be starting and will take place from 13<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> October. Please don't forget to send in slings that are likely to be used in school for testing. It is a legal requirement that all slings are LOLER tested every 6 months.

Have a lovely weekend.

## Events and dates to remember

### Autumn Term

#### Dates



**Friday 24th October 2025**

Inset day 3 (no pupils)

**Monday 27th October -**

**Friday 31st October 2025**

Half-Term Holiday

**Thursday 18th December 2025**

Last day for pupils

**Friday 19th December 2025**

Planning & Preparation Day (no pupils)

## Star of the Week

**Savannah, Ali and DJ** for welcoming and guiding parents to the Isobel Centre at the Family Induction Day last week.



**Harry L** for engaging and following instructions with the brightest smile.

**Lillie** for leading the most relaxing mindfulness session. You're an amazing guide!

**Ayyan** for demonstrating good practice in food safety during cooking at Richley House.

**Matteo** for some fantastic work in hydro this week. Matteo did some lovely jumping and standing in the pool and joined a friend in a game. We are proud of you, Matteo!

**Leila** for getting to know her new 1:1. Leila has been interacting nicely with Dilber and working hard to show her what she can do!

**Leyla** for having an outstanding swimming session this week. She impressed everyone with her amazing walking in the hydro pool and completed over 200 kicks!



## Kindness Award

Halima for choosing to invite her family for a meal cooked by herself.



## Learning@Linden

### The Primary Department

Ukulele Class have been having lots of fun getting ready for, and taking part in, weekly horse-riding sessions. We enjoy travelling together, exploring the stables and allotments, talking to the staff at the stables and riding the horses. We have met a few different horses but like them all.



The Primary Department had a lovely time celebrating Black History Month last week with a special assembly. We explored music by famous black artists through a musical massage story. Students enjoyed sensations of sensory scarves, squeezes and hand massage. We ended assembly with a little dance together!



We celebrated Teddy Bear Day on the 9th Sep 2025. The children embraced this comforting and relatable theme for exploring comfort, companionship, pretend play, and safety.



We have been learning about people who help us. Harp class children loved learning about doctors, what they do to help us and how they treat people when they are ill. The children displayed creativity and problem-solving skills when engaged in role play of being a doctor or a patient.



In Maths with Roberta, we have been focusing on number work and play. The team have embraced Roberta's modelling and coaching to support the children in developing a deep, secure, and adaptable understanding of numbers through playful, concrete experiences. It has been exciting to see children being challenged further to begin to solve one-step problems that involve addition and subtraction in numbers 0 to 6. Well done to all!



## Otis STEM Project Awards Ceremony

On Friday 26th September, Linden Lodge had the great privilege of hosting a very special Awards Ceremony for our Minerva students who last year took part in the inspiring international programme organised by Otis, the Made to Move Communities (MTMC) Challenge.

The MTMC Challenge is a prestigious global STEM competition which brings together schools from across the world to design innovative solutions that promote inclusive mobility. This year's theme invited students to incorporate Artificial Intelligence into their projects, finding creative ways to solve real world accessibility challenges.

As we proudly shared in our Summer Term newsletter, our Minerva 2 students, supported by Sana Uddin and Beatriz Calvo Pérez, achieved second place in this highly competitive challenge. Representing our region, they competed against schools from cities such as Madrid, Montpellier, Berlin, Milan, Istanbul and Kuwait.

Since October, the students worked every week with their teachers and dedicated mentors from Otis to develop their idea: an AI powered app called Walkway. Designed to support visually impaired individuals, the app promotes safe, independent navigation while also fostering social connection and community awareness.

On 20th March, the students presented their project to an international panel of judges, and only a few weeks later we received the wonderful news that they had been awarded second place, winning a \$15,000 grant to further STEM learning at Linden Lodge.

On the day of the celebration, we were honoured to welcome a group of senior leaders from Otis to meet the students and present them with their prizes. Among them were Enrique Minarro, President EMEA and LA, and Ales Korotvicka, Business Leader UK and Nordics, who congratulated the students personally, presenting the cheque for \$15,000 as well as recognition plaques. Both leaders spoke with warmth and admiration, praising the students' creativity, hard work, and the potential impact of their idea on the VI community. Their words were moving and uplifting, and our students felt truly valued and celebrated.

Some families joined us for the ceremony, alongside classmates and staff, making the event even more special. The atmosphere was full of pride and emotion, and several students shared that it had been one of the best days of their lives. After the ceremony, Otis leaders joined students for refreshments and conversation, taking the time to listen to their reflections and celebrate together. That same day, Otis colleagues also offered their time and energy to support our school community by sanding and painting indoor and outdoor benches. Thanks to their generosity, our students can now enjoy beautiful, refreshed seating areas across the school grounds. Their dedication and enthusiasm left a lasting impression on us all.

Otis have expressed their commitment to continuing this partnership with Linden Lodge. The next exciting step will be the opportunity for our Sixth Form students to take part in work experience with Otis, opening new doors for their future learning and careers.

We are incredibly proud of our students' achievement. This project has been not only a giant leap in their learning, but also a deeply personal experience, one that has allowed them to meet professionals who showed admiration and respect for their work, and who are keen to continue supporting them. A huge thank you to our Minerva 2 students, their project leads, Minerva TAs and to Otis, especially Natasha Jones, for bringing this opportunity to Linden Lodge and making it such a powerful and memorable experience.



## Tactile book design workshops

Tactile picture books are ones in which all the illustrations are especially designed to be explored by touch. Linden Lodge students have access to the UK's largest collection via the ClearVision Project Library, based on the school site.

In June, ClearVision will be hosting the UK judging round of an international tactile book competition- this is a great chance for anyone to try their hand at making a tactile book and ClearVision staff will be running free online workshops on how to make a tactile book for anyone who'd like to give it a try. The dates for [online workshops](#) can be found on the ClearVision website, but we'll hold an in-person workshop at school if enough people are interested, please email [alex@clearvisionproject.org](mailto:alex@clearvisionproject.org) if you'd be interesting in attending an in-person event.

## Therapy News

October is AAC Awareness month - The SaLT team would like to raise awareness of AAC, highlighting a range of communication methods, and celebrating those who benefit from it



# AAC Awareness Month

October is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) awareness month. Here is some information from the Speech and Language Therapy team.

AAC encompasses different methods of communication that we use to express ourselves. This may include gesture, facial expressions, eye-gaze, signing, and devices (e.g. battery powered and paper based tools). The awareness month highlights and celebrates the use of AAC across settings. It is important to acknowledge communication is multi-faceted, and does not just include oral speech.

### Commonly used devices and methods:

- Photos or widget symbols
- Communication booklets/ boards
- Signing (e.g. BSL, Sign Supported English)
- Tablets with AAC applications
- Eye Gaze technology
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs)



### Speech and Language Therapist's role

- Assess an individual's needs for appropriate AAC for communication
- Train the individual, family, carers, and key staff members to use the AAC system
- Customise and personalise the AAC system (not 'one-size fits all')
- On-going monitoring and support in the long term

### Top Tips when using AAC:

- Become familiar with the individual's system
- Collaborate with the MDT
- Model language using AAC, provide communicative opportunities
- Ensure AAC is easily accessible
- Incorporate accessories for best access (e.g. cases, stands, mounts, switches).
- Encourage (not force) AAC system use
- Presume potential - allow for and demonstrate further development of current and new skills and abilities.

### FAQs

- 'Is AAC only for children?' No, AAC can be used by individuals of all ages, including adults with neurodegenerative conditions like ALS.
- 'How long does it take someone to learn how to use their AAC device?' Learning AAC varies for each individual and depends on a number of factors. The individual's SaLT may be able to provide more insights; however, it is impossible to determine a definitive timeline.
- 'Will using AAC prevent my child from learning how to speak?' Studies have actually shown that using AAC can actually enhance speech and language development.
- 'Is using AAC really complicated?' Many AAC systems are easy to learn, and there's support available to help with more advanced tools when needed.

## Noticeboard



ERIC is the national charity dedicated to improving children's bowel and bladder health. Their mission is to reduce the impact of continence problems on children and their families.

<https://eric.org.uk/childrens-bowels/>



**NHS**  
South London Children and  
Young People's Community  
Immunisation Service

### Missed your flu vaccine?

**Live or attend school in the borough of Wandsworth? Aged 4 - 16?**

Come down to a flu catch-up clinic and protect yourself!

Thursday 16 October, 15:30 - 17:15  
St John's Therapy Centre, SW11 1SW

Saturday 1 November, 10:00 - 15:00  
Balham Library Hall, SW12 8QY

Saturday 15 November, 10:00 - 14:00  
Faylands Children's Centre, SW16 1SY

**Call 020 3903 3374 or  
scan the QR code for  
more information or to  
book an appointment**



**NHS**  
South London Children and  
Young People's Community  
Immunisation Service

### Missed your flu vaccine?

**Live or attend school in the borough of Wandsworth? Aged 4 - 16?**

Come down to a flu catch-up clinic and protect yourself!

Friday 28 November, 15:30 - 17:15  
St John's Therapy Centre, SW11 1SW

Saturday 20 December, 10:00 - 15:00  
Balham Library Hall, SW12 8QY

**Call 020 3903 3374 or  
scan the QR code for  
more information or to  
book an appointment**



Links to external websites are provided for convenience. Linden Lodge School does not endorse or assume responsibility for the content of these sites.