



EVERY CHILD CAN ACHIEVE

# Luddenham News

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## Have you seen our local resident?



One of the things I love about Luddenham is being able to talk to you directly in car queue regularly throughout the week. It's a great opportunity to catch up, but one of the topics recently has been about our local resident – the white squirrel!

Did you know they are rare! Often a variant of the grey squirrel caused by a genetic mutation. Unless we get really close it will be tricky to know if it is a Leucistic squirrel (white fur, dark eyes, sometimes dark fur patches) or albino (White fur, red eyes).

True albino squirrels are super rare about 1 in 100,000. There are only about 50 or so in the UK so how lucky is Luddenham to see such a rare sight. Keep a look out in car queue you never know when they might pop up again.

Thank you to the parent who shared this image. We love spotting wildlife here at Luddenham. What wonderful piece of nature will be spotted next?

## Late collections – Update and changes to fees

We're really fortunate to have a car queue which provides parents with up to an additional hour of supervision of children each day. We are also blessed to have members of staff who are willing to provide wraparound care for pupils, but this does extend their day from 8.30am until 5.30pm. Which I am sure you can appreciate is a long enough day.

We have noticed recently some parents seem to think, 'It's ok they're safe at school so it doesn't matter if I am late.' Of course, they are safe at school we wouldn't want it any other way, but we all also have other aspects of the job to do and our own families to get back home to.

We know a rare occasional late collection can happen, but it should not be a regular occurrence.

Therefore, I ask that you think about Who is on standby for my child? When I know I can't get there, who can I call to step in? It's not the school staff's role. Please put a plan in place for when those emergencies happen. This is a time when those Parent WhatsApp groups can really help.

Moving forward and to recognise the additional staffing cost (must be at least 2) to cover late collections the following tariff will be applied.

If at the end of the day, you will be late and there is no space in After School Club then

- Up to 10 mins late will incur a £5 late fee
- Between 10-20 mins late will incur a £10 late fee
- Between 20-30 mins late will incur a £20 late fee
- Between 30mins to an hour late will incur a £40 late fee

This late fee will be added to your Gateway account and is expected to be paid within 10 working days.

If the payment is not made or non-payment for breakfast or after school club, then this amount will be processed through the small claims court.

It most certainly is not something we ever want to do, but sadly late collections are on the rise.

Please note: If at any time after school has finished, we cannot get hold of you then a call to Social Services will be made in line with our Safeguarding policy so please make sure all numbers and emergency contacts are up to date.

## Book Fair - Thank you!

Thank you very much for all your interest and purchases at our book fair last week. We have raised over **£600** for the school to spend on books. So, if your child is keen to have a certain book in school to borrow can they share the name of it with their Pupil Leadership Team class representative.



## Do you have any of the following to donate to the school please?

- Empty washing up bottles
- Plastic cups or plates



## Free school meal vouchers

Free school meal vouchers have been sent out this week by WONDE. Please ensure you redeem them as they do have a cut-off date.



## HAF Programme

Have you booked your places yet? Use your EVoucher to book your children/young people onto free, inspiring holiday activities, including sports, music, arts and many other fun opportunities, including a free, healthy meal! For more information on how to use your voucher, please [click here](#). Please also see the HAF Swale family hubs poster at the end of the newsletter for their timetable.



## Phones in school

We recently received an open letter regarding switching to only allowing brick phones in school. We actively discouraged phones being in school for children but in those times where you have requested them, I wanted to clarify our procedures in managing them onsite safely.

Any phone brought into school **MUST** be handed in **TURNE**D OFF to the main office. Here they are stored in a box securely.

Children do not have access to them throughout the school day.

They are returned to the child (still off) when they leave school.

This stops them being trackable or used in an unsafe manner.

As I said, we would actively discourage the need to come into school, but for those who switch between adults during the school week or use the public bus, we know parents would like their child to have one.



## *Screen time – the continued debate*

I recently read an article which really resonated with me both as a parent and an educator. There is so much out there regarding screen time for children and it's important that you focus on what is best for you and your child/ren rather than be sucked into following the 'norm'. I have lost count of how many times I have heard, 'But my friend is allowed or has one.' from one of my children.

As a parent, I have had to learn the hard way just like any other, yes I have made mistakes, but what I think is important is that you consider the impact it has on your child.

The article I read started with the phrase, 'My child can sit with a tablet for 2 hours but can't handle a lesson for 10 minutes.'

I have heard this or similar comments from parents. Often used alongside, they're bored in class/school and it's not matched to their interests. Whilst as a school we can make reasonable adaptations, we still have an important curriculum to teach.

Then came the information – whilst looking at a screen a child receives a stream of ultra-fast stimulation: scene changes every 2-3 seconds, bright colours and instant rewards. Their nervous system gets used to that pace.

Now transfer that to a classroom lesson or an activity at home, such as a board game or reading a book that requires a totally different pace and the child understandably will struggle. It appears that they cannot concentrate. A screen will teach the brain to get dopamine without effort. So any activity that requires them to wait, listen or think begins to feel like an overload.

If a child accesses this at a young age, they will struggle to stay on one task and switch. This overload can result in changes in emotions, throwing things or just never finishing anything.

The brain gets used to living in swipe mode.

This also applies to us adults. I know all too well how engrossed I can get in scrolling. I am modelling that to my children.

I want to draw your attention to this, not to put blame but to challenge you to reflect on what life looks like on a screen at home as it can often create the illusion that the problem is discipline when actually the attention system has changed. It is now one that demands a new stimulus before an activity actually ends so normal reality feels slow and irritating.

I know this from my own experience. My children can't copy with watching anything that has adverts. Giving up all too quickly when things are hard as that gratification or dopamine hit doesn't come.

On the next page is some information from the National Online Safety Team on Screen Addiction. All we ask is that you consider what rules and boundaries you have when using screens. We have them in school and I am constantly reviewing them at home. All my children's devices at home are controlled by a family part of my settings. I can control how long my child uses an app or can even access a screen and I have really started to see the benefits. Trust me, they are not instant or happen overnight. The change takes time and yes I have had the tantrums and moans about the changes, but I know it's for the best.

So I hope in sharing this with you, you will reflect on what's best for your child. Don't get me wrong sometimes you let them have a little bit longer so you can get something done, but that's not every day because the long term affects can be really difficult to undo.



It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech-related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?



# What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION



## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Children as young as 13 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially recognised gaming addiction as a modern disease. The condition was confirmed as part of their International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which serves as an international standard for diagnosing and treating health conditions.

### LACK OF SLEEP

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

## LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.



## CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ADVICE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes', explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face to face interactions.

### APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



## Top Tips for Parents



### LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

### LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

### REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focussed the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

### LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate content etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

### MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

### ENCOURAGE ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES



It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their Outdoor activities to show your support.

## STATISTICS

**52%** of children aged **3-4** go online for nearly **9hrs** a week

**82%** of children aged **5-7** go online for nearly **9.5hrs** a week

**93%** of children aged **8-11** go online for nearly **13.5hrs** a week

**99%** of children aged **12-15** go online for nearly **20.5hrs** a week

Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018

SOURCES: <https://www.independent.co.uk>, Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk>, <http://uk.businessinsider.com/how-app-developers-keep-us-addicted-to-our-smartphones>, Journal of Youth Studies: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/tech/one-five-kids-losing-sleep-9653986>, University of Leeds: [https://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/1296/lack\\_of\\_sleep\\_damaging\\_for\\_children](https://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/1296/lack_of_sleep_damaging_for_children)

# Knife Safety



#STOPKNIFECRIME

Founded by Leanne Lucas  
Let's Be Blunt CIC  
Trauma-informed. Evidence-led. Prevention focused.

## OUR MISSION

TO CREATE SOCIAL CHANGE,  
BY EMBEDDING PREVENTION  
INTO EVERYDAY LIFE -  
ACROSS HOMES, SCHOOLS  
AND COMMUNITIES.

### WHY LET'S BE BLUNT CIC EXISTS

Every year, pointed kitchen knives taken from ordinary homes and everyday settings are often used in life-altering incidents. Safer, rounded or square-tip kitchen knife designs, offer a practical and powerful solution. Just as seatbelts and smoke alarms once reshaped public safety, safer kitchen knives can help transform our communities.

As a survivor of a knife attack, I know firsthand the impact this has on victims, families and the wider community.

### OUR WORK

Let's Be Blunt promotes the widespread adoption of safer kitchen knife design, education and preventative community action to significantly reduce knife-related violence. We work with communities, retailers, policymakers and public bodies to shift both awareness and standards. Real change happens when communities decide prevention matters and act on it.

### FOUNDER STORY

I am Leanne Lucas, a teacher who was seriously injured in the Southport knife attack in July 2024.

After experiencing first-hand the consequences of knife harm, I founded Let's Be Blunt CIC to drive prevention and change.

### HOW WE AIM TO MAKE A CHANGE

- 01 Safer design**  
Shifting from pointed-tip knives to safer, non-pointed kitchen knife designs.
- 02 Safe disposal points**  
Increase the presence of safe and easily accessible knife disposal points.
- 03 Adult responsibility**  
Increase adult awareness and instil a greater sense of responsibility through training.
- 04 National prevention mindset shift**  
Make safer non-pointed kitchen knives the expected standard in UK homes, schools and community settings.



MAKE THE CHANGE. SAVE A LIFE. TAKE THE PLEDGE

contact@letsbeblunt.co.uk   letsbeblunt.co.uk   @letsbebluntcic

There certainly are some big topics up for discussion and debate this week, but I recently attended a headteacher's briefing where the charity Let's Be Blunt shared some information that really got me reflecting. I watched dash cam footage of police officers who attended a home of a family where a 10-year-old had got a sharp knife from the kitchen and was using it to be threatening.

They shared some key messages to consider about making sure homes and schools are safe. For further information please see the image to the left.

We've taken on board the advice given and whilst we have safety knives for children for curricular subjects, we are aware that we did have sharp pointed end knives in adult only areas.

We have made the conscious decision to remove these and will replace with a rounded ended one if needed.

The Violent Reduction Unit in Kent and Medway have launched a safer knife replacement scheme aimed at reducing knife-related incidents, injuries and ensuring the safety of our community.

It aims at removing all sharp pointed-end knives from the home and replacing them with rounded ends.

This scheme does not replace advice already in place such as:

- Do not leave knives on the draining board.
- Do not have a knife block on the counter or a magnet holder on display.
- Ensure you always know where your knives are.
- If you are concerned lock your knives away.
- In an argument do not run to the kitchen, create a safe barrier between you.
- Dial 999 in an emergency.
- 


For more information, please visit our website


[www.kentandmedwayvru.co.uk](http://www.kentandmedwayvru.co.uk) or contact [vru.programme.delivery@kent.police.uk](mailto:vru.programme.delivery@kent.police.uk)


Together, we can make a difference. #safertogether #Pointless


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 [kentandmedwayvru](https://www.instagram.com/kentandmedwayvru)

 [kentandmedwayvru](https://www.youtube.com/kentandmedwayvru)



# Superstar Corner

Let us celebrate together your achievements outside of school this past week. Don't forget to send in your photos.



Congratulations on receiving Player of the Match.

Well done!



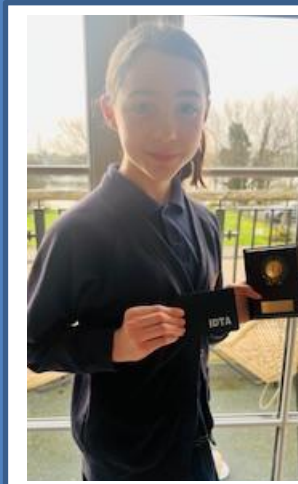
Well done for doing your first ride off the lead rein. Also for trying your best with all that's involved with looking after a pony.

Well done!



Congratulations on your performance with the cast of Kent School of Dance at the Hazlett Theatre last week. Performing in 2 acts from the show.

Well done!



Congratulations on receiving a distinction in your recent contemporary dance exam.



You have worked really hard for this 75 metres certificate, congratulations.

Well done!



Congratulations on receiving a distinction in your recent contemporary dance exam. Well done!

# New Lunch Menu

Please see below the new menu for after half term, please note this menu will not go live on ParentPay until Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Please do not book any lunches for after easter until this date. Any bookings made before will be lost as the old menu will still be on the system until then.



## SPRING INTO SUMMER MENU

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK ONE	Beef Bolognese Pasta 1 Cheese & Pesto Swirl 1,7 V Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Baked Wedges Seasonal Vegetables  Ice Cream 7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	Macaroni Cheese 1,7 V Chick Pea & Spinach Biryani VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Carrots Mixed Peppers  Toffee Tart 1,7 & Custard 7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	Roast Gammon & Gravy Meatfree Meatballs & Gravy 6 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rustic Roast Potatoes Cabbage Swede  Fruit Jelly VG Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Chicken Korma Herby Tomato Pasta 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rice Green Beans Carrots  Chocolate Orange Cake 1 VG Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Fish Fingers 1,8 Wrap Stack 1,7 V Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Chips Sweetcorn & Peas Coleslaw 9  Lemon Drizzle Biscuit 1,6 VG Yoghurt 3,7 Fruit Pots VG
WEEK TWO	Cheesy Cauliflower Pasta 1,7 V Vegetable Burger in a Bun 1,5,6 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Baked Wedges, Carrots, Peas  Honey Cake 1 & Custard 7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	Minced Beef Curry Pesto & Pea Pasta 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rice Seasonal Vegetables  Summer Trifle 1,7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	Roast Chicken & Gravy Samosa Puff 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rustic Roast Potatoes Broccoli Carrots  Cornflake Cookie 1,7,16 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Chicken Fajita 1 Tomato Spaghetti 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rice Tomato Salsa Green Beans  Carrot & Orange Cake 1 VG Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Salmon Fish Cake 1,8 Margherita Pizza 1,3,7 V Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Chips, Peas, Grated Carrot  Oaty Biscuit 1,15 VG Yoghurt 3,7 Fruit Pots VG
WEEK THREE	Mild Chilli Beef Tomato & Herb Penne Pasta 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rice Peas Mixed Peppers  Jam Roly Poly 1,6 VG & Custard 7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	Chicken Pie 1 Vegetable Stir Fried Noodles 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Crushed Potatoes Seasonal Vegetables  Ice Cream 7 Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Fruit Pots VG	BRUNCH Pork Sausage & Bacon 1,3,6 Or Vegetable Sausage 1 VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Brunch Hash Potatoes Baked Beans Mushrooms & Tomatoes  Fruit Jelly VG Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Margherita Pizza 1,3,7 V Loaded Cajun Bean Wedges VG Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Rainbow Rice Sweetcorn Coleslaw 9  Sultana Cake 1 VG Mr Nourish Biscuit 1 VG Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG	Fish Fingers 1,8 Cheese & Bean Parcel 1,7 V Jackets with a Choice of Toppings 7,8,9  Chips, Peas, Baked Beans Cucumber Sticks  Caramel Cookie 1,7 V Yoghurt 3,7, Fruit Pots VG

1 Wheat Gluten 2 Crustaceans 3 Soybean 4 Mustard 5 Sesame 6 Sulphites/Sulphur Dioxide 7 Milk 8 Fish 9 Egg  
 10 Peanuts 11 Molluscs 12 Celeriac/Celery 13 Nuts 14 Lupins 15 Oat Gluten 16 Barley Gluten VG Vegan V Vegetarian

Selection of Salads 9, Homemade Bread 1,3. Some of our schools may use pre prepped potatoes or vegetables on occasions. These may contain sulphites and celeriac. Please discuss with your manager.



## 🌸 Our LSFA Easter Raffle is now LIVE! 🌸

The raffle will be drawn on **31st March**, so there's plenty of time to grab your tickets and be in with a chance of winning one of our fantastic prizes.

We have our **fabulous LSFA Rainbow Hampers**, created from all the wonderful **colour-coordinated donations brought in for Non-Uniform Day**, along with extra items purchased using the money raised.

A huge **thank you to everyone who donated** — the hampers look amazing and are packed full of goodies! 🌈

We also have some **lovely prizes kindly donated by local businesses**, and we're incredibly grateful for their support.

All money raised from the Easter fundraising will go towards **Rangers Day enrichment**. The funds raised will help the school **expand these experiences and provide even more opportunities for the children**.

📄 **Grab your tickets here:**

<https://www.peoplesfundraising.com/raffle/LSFA-Easter-Raffle>

Good luck everyone! 🍀 ✨

## BREAK THE RULES DAY

A little reminder that the LSFA Break the Rules Day is happening on Monday (16th March) 🎉

Over the weekend you might want to grab any bits your child would like for their rule-breaking... crazy hair spray, temporary tattoos, nail polish, colourful socks or a nut-free treat for break time!

Don't forget to pay your child's rule-break "fine" via Gateway – it's 50p per rule or £3 to break them all.

All money raised from Break the Rules Day will go towards supporting class trips. Each year the LSFA contributes funding towards school trips for every class to help make these experiences possible for the children.

We can't wait to see all the crazy hair, bright socks and rule-breaking fun on Monday! 🌈 ✨



## The LSFA Easter Egg Hunt – Tuesday 31st March 🥚🍫

During the school day, they'll head outside with their classes and, in their house teams, race around the field searching for their coloured eggs.

It's always lovely to watch how excited they get running around trying to spot the eggs, and of course the best part is receiving their chocolate Easter egg prize at the end. It's a day full of fun that the children really look forward to each year.

Entry is £2.50 payable via Gateway. All children will be able to take part regardless but all money raised from the Easter fundraising will go towards supporting Rangers Day enrichment, helping to fund activities that broaden the experiences available to the children throughout the year.



Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March

LSFA Break the Rules Day/ Neurodiversity  
Celebration Week

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

World Down Syndrome Day – Awareness  
(21/3/26) & Red Nose Day

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Share the Learning Y3 2:45pm

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March

iRock Concert 9:15am  
Share the Learning Year 1 2:45pm

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March

Rangers Day 4  
Y6 Wembley Trip

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March

Y4 Share the Learning 2:45pm

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March

LSFA Egg Hunt

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April

Y5 Share the Learning 2:45pm

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April

Y3 & Y4 Easter Performance  
END OF TERM

Wishing you a happy and  
safe weekend. Look  
forward to seeing you on  
Monday

Bee Careful



# HAF Timetable\*

Swale Family Hubs

\*Holiday Activity Fund Activities

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April**

Swallows Leisure

Clip n Climb with lunch.

Age 5yrs+ with  
parent/carer.

Time: 9:30 - 11:30

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April**

Sheppey Leisure

Mini Golf with snack.

Age 5+  
with parent/carer.

Available Times:  
11:00  
11:30

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April**

Little Potters

Little Potters with Lunch.

Age 5yrs+  
with parent/carer.

Time: 12:00 - 14:00



**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April**

The Light -  
Sittingbourne

Bowling with Lunch  
with parent/carer.

Available Times:  
11:00  
11:20

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

Milton Court  
Family Hub

Gaming bus also sports  
and board games with  
lunch.

Age 5yrs +  
Children only

Time: 10:30 - 14:30

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April**

The Light -  
Sittingbourne

Cinema to see Hoppers  
with popcorn combo.

Age 5yr+  
with parent/carer.

Time: 11:00 - 13:00

**Booking on to HAF  
activities**

Please email into  
[swalefh@kent.gov.uk](mailto:swalefh@kent.gov.uk)  
for the links to book  
your place.

\*Your child must receive  
benefit-related free school  
meals to be eligible and to  
be able to provide a valid  
HAF code. Please contact  
the school, if you haven't  
received your code.  
Aged 4yrs to 16yrs.

