



Dear Parents and Carers,

This term has been another short, busy and rewarding one at the same time, with lots of opportunities for the children both in and beyond the classroom. There has been a real sense of momentum across the school, with pupils embracing new opportunities, developing confidence and continuing to demonstrate the positive attitudes we are so proud of.

A real highlight has been the continued development of our OPAL play programme, which has gone from strength to strength thanks to Mrs Patrick and Mrs Pope. Children are now confidently exploring a wide range of play opportunities, with new resources introduced each week including table-top play, sand areas, suitcases and, most recently, den building on the field. It has been wonderful to see children working together to build, create and imagine using materials such as crates, tarpaulins and ropes, developing both their creativity and their ability to collaborate.

The impact has been clear to see. Lunchtimes are increasingly full of creativity, cooperation and enjoyment, with children showing responsibility in how they use and look after equipment. There is a strong sense of pride in the way pupils are developing their play and making the most of the opportunities available. Staff have commented on the positive impact this is having on relationships and readiness to learn, with children returning to class settled and ready to engage.

We have also been incredibly proud of our Year 6 pupils, who approached SATs week with maturity, resilience and calm determination. They demonstrated not only their academic learning but also the character we aim to develop in all of our pupils. They represented themselves and the school exceptionally well.

Enrichment opportunities have continued to be a key feature of the term. Year 5 enjoyed an exciting visit from the Wonder Dome planetarium, bringing their learning to life in a memorable and engaging way. Pupils have also taken part in cross country events and ongoing swimming lessons, developing both their physical skills and confidence.

Last week, pupils from Years 5 and 6 represented the school at a Quad Kids athletics event held at Newlands Girls' School. The event brought together children from 11 primary schools and included both individual and team competitions. Wessex was represented by Maiya, Zach, Zayena, Abi, Migers, Oliver S, Georgie, Eva, Isla, Johar, Magnus and Kiwi from Year 6, alongside Peter, Tylar, Junior, Penelope, Amelia, Talia and Daniel from Year 5. The children showed great effort and teamwork throughout, and we were particularly pleased to see Maiya achieve first place in the individual girls' competition! While we did not place as a team, the pupils represented the school very well.

Across the school, we continue to place a strong emphasis on developing the whole child, including relationships, inclusion and character. It is pleasing to see children increasingly able to reflect on their actions, support one another and show empathy. As one pupil shared during our recent Challenge Partners work, "The school is a welcoming place...

END OF TERM NEWSLETTER MAY 2026

... everyone is here to support you. We're all different which is what makes us all the same."

Our involvement with Challenge Partners has proven to be most beneficial this term. As well as myself, Mrs Pope and Mrs Corbett visiting other schools to review them, we have welcomed external reviewers into Wessex. They spent time in lessons and also speaking to pupils, staff and leaders.

It was also particularly encouraging to hear what colleagues from other schools said they would take away from their time at Wessex. Several commented on the strength and consistency of our character curriculum, noting how clearly the Wessex Way is understood and lived by pupils, not just through shared language but in daily practice. Others were interested in practical aspects of our approach, including the use of recognition linked to values, our adapted use of curriculum schemes such as Kapow and Literacy Tree, and the quality and range of writing seen in books. Our OPAL provision also generated interest, especially from schools at an earlier stage of development. More broadly, reviewers spoke about the positive culture across the school, the strength of relationships and the openness of staff, with many leaving with ideas they were keen to take back and develop in their own settings.

It has been particularly powerful to hear the feedback directly from the children. One pupil explained, "I really like the school; it shows you that if you're honest, you will be rewarded for doing the right thing and being positive rather than getting consequences." Another reflected, "If people are being unkind, it might be because they have been through tough times. They may have had some trauma."

These comments demonstrate not only the clarity of our behaviour approach but also the depth of understanding our pupils have. Another pupil described school life by saying, "Life is a bit like a roller coaster; sometimes you are on the up and sometimes you're going down but everyone here brings you up," while another shared, "Even if you think you're alone, the teachers are there for you to have any conversations." One child summed it up simply: "I like the school. It helps me to grow my brain and be a better person."

Overall, it has been a term filled with fun, laughter and a strong sense of community. It has been lovely to see the children enjoying school, supporting one another and making the most of everything on offer.

The Children's Commissioner for England has launched a national survey called The Big Future, giving children and young people the chance to share their views about their lives, communities and what a good childhood should look like today. We would encourage you to complete the survey at home. The aim is to ensure children's voices are heard and used to influence decisions at a national level. Click [here](#) to access the survey

Mr Beavan

Dates and reminders



Wessex Weekly



Positivity



Honesty



Respect



Pride

Diary dates coming up



Monday 25th to Friday 29th May
HALF TERM

Monday 1st June
INSET DAY – No school

Tuesday 2nd June
Start of Term 6 – 8.45am to 8.55am

Friday 5th June
Y5 Trip to Butser Ancient Farm

Friday 12th June
Y2 Trip to Windsor Castle

Good News Certificates



FS2: Ethan A and Barney

Year 1: Holly and Reya

Year 2: Nellie-Mae and Delilah-Rose

Year 3: Mitranish and Delilah

Year 4: Ava F and Charlie

Year 5: Aleena-Rose and Jamie

Year 6: Harlow and Nehchal

Attendance

Lower School: Cherry
Winners with 99%

Upper School: Yew
Winners with 99.7%

School attendance this week

94.7%



Last week = 95.7%
Last year average = 94.9%

Aiming for 97%

Value of the week



Respect



This week, our focus has been on diversity as part of our school value of respect. The children have been learning that we are all different, and that these differences make our school community richer and stronger. We have explored how people may have different backgrounds, beliefs, cultures and experiences, and why it is important to treat everyone with kindness and understanding.

Housepoint updates

The scores on the doors are in! Huge congratulations go to **Stuart** house.

Windsor – 2981
Lancaster – 2982
Stuart – 3231
York – 2569

As a reward, Stuart house may wear Mufti on the first **THURSDAY back, 4th June** as Year 5 are on a school trip on Friday 5th June.

Break the rules thanks

Thank you to everyone who broke the rules today before we break up for half term. Thanks to your generosity, we have raised over £440 to go to the PTA to help fund projects and opportunities for the children.

Year 4 Tables battle

As Year 4 have their Multiplication Tables Check in the first two weeks after half term, this is the final push for pupils to cement their knowledge of times tables facts. We have been very proud of many children who have risen to the challenge and have secured the knowledge of more tables facts.

There is a half term contest for pupils in year 4 to help their class to get the most points. Who will win this challenge? Larch or Lime – over to you!

Attendance

This time last year, our attendance to date for the year was almost 96%. This year, our average attendance to date is just over 95%. We have 40 pupils whose attendance is below 90% – therefore currently considered to be persistently absent. An attendance of 90% means that, each year, children will miss 19 days of school – that's almost four weeks and so much learning. If your child's attendance is lower than 90%, please do consider if they are well enough for school if they are under the weather. We do often ask for medical evidence for absences where a pupil's attendance is lower than 90%.

EYFS Term 5



Wessex Weekly



We thoroughly enjoyed reading *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. We listened to the story, joined in with the reading, and even acted it out together. Inspired by our learning, we decided to go on our very own bear hunt!

To prepare, we created clever disguises, making bear ears as well as binoculars and telescopes so we could spot any bears from a distance. We eagerly explored different areas around our school, searching high and low.

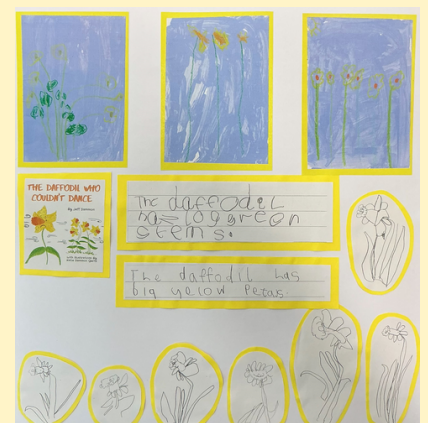
Although we didn't find any bears this time, we discovered lots of exciting clues that suggested they might have been nearby. The adventure has certainly sparked our imaginations, and we will continue to keep our eyes peeled for any signs of bears!



PE on Thursdays has been a hit this term. We are very lucky to have coaches from MNR to teach us 'Bikeability'. The children have been playing some really fun warm up games that focus on following instructions, teamwork and balance. They then move onto more challenging balancing activities including moving along a bench in different ways. Finally they get to use a balance bike and have learned over the weeks so far: the names of the different parts, how to mount the bike safely and how to navigate it around obstacles. The coaches have been catering to the different abilities and we have witnessed some great successes!



As the season changed from winter to spring we spent time looking for changes in our environment. We noticed flowers that had grown in our reception garden, including daffodils. We looked closely at them and learned the name of the different parts and learned about the life cycle. We followed instructions for how to draw daffodils and also painted some, using fine paint brushes. We read a story called *The Daffodil Who Danced* all about a daffodil that was different.



Year 1 Term 5



Wessex Weekly



Year One have had lots of fun this term. We are proud of how hard the children are working.

Art has been extremely colourful. We have learnt about primary and secondary colours and (with our aprons) made lots of secondary colours. We even got to splash and mix paint together in the style of Jackson Pollock



Year One maths has been quite tricky this term! We have been learning all about arrays, rows, columns and division. We even learnt how to count in 2s, 5s and 10s to help us count quickly. We made patterns (or arrays) and now we can share equally.



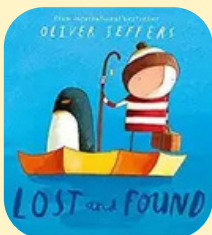
This term we got to design and make our own rockets! We started by using Sketchpad to make a list of equipment, next we designed the rockets before making and testing them. We used our maths skills to measure how far they flew.



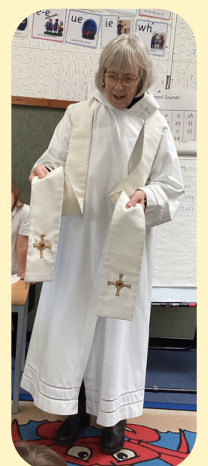
In History this term, we have become explorers! We looked at 4 different famous explorers- Christopher Columbus, Matthew Henson, Mary Kingsley and Dame Ellen AcArthur. We looked at where they explored, what they needed to achieve their goals and the many challenges they faced. We created our own emblems to represent what kind of explorers we want to be!



This term, science has been all about plants. We've learnt the difference between deciduous and evergreen trees. We have had a great time exploring the environmental area, looking for wild flowers. The best part was dismantling real flowers and looking for seeds. Towards the end we got to eat some fruit and vegetables while learning about the parts of a plant we can eat.



This term we arrived at school to find a lonely penguin in our classrooms. We used imperative verbs to write instructions. We also wrote our own stories based on 'Lost and Found' using lots of adjectives and story language. Three weeks later, a huge, scary, hairy creature appeared! It was a yeti. We compared the yeti's feelings at the beginning and end of the story.



In RE we have begun to explore Christianity. We were fortunate to have Rev Joan visit us and talk about baptism; she showed us what happens at a baptism service and told us why it is important for many Christians. We have also learnt about Christian symbols and looked at different types of church.

Year 2 Term 5



Wessex Weekly



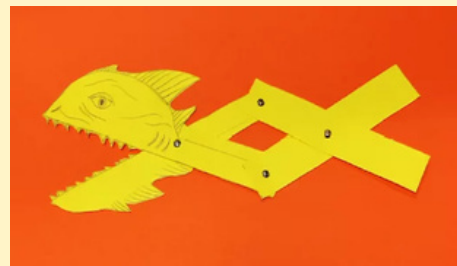
It has been another fun-filled term in Year 2. We are very proud of all the progress the children are making and we hope they have a lovely half term.

Our reading texts this term started with our first chapter book 'Cakes in Space'. The book took the children on a journey to a new planet Nova Mundi, but there was trouble along the way with aliens and destructive cakes. The children enjoyed learning new vocabulary including a few alien words. The second book of the term was Eric by Shaun Tan which included an intriguing foreign exchange student who liked to live in a pantry. The children summarised the story and made predictions about Eric.



Our writing this term focused on fictional worlds and fantasy. The children read a story about a naughty alien who had mistakenly taken other children's toys. The children wrote their own version of the story and had fun creating their own aliens. The children were also inspired by the book The Dragon Machine and wrote an encyclopedia entry all about dragons. Did you know dragons like smelly cheese?

In science, we have been looking at the life cycle of plants. We learnt how a seed needs light, warmth and water to grow, but that some plants have enough energy in their seeds to germinate with just water. We planted our own sweet peas or sunflower seeds and have been using the scientific skill of observation to watch them grow. The children have done a great job of measuring them and counting each leaf as they appear.



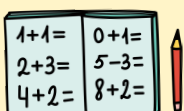
In DT this term we have been designing a moving monster. We studied how some toys and objects move and created our own linkages. We then did some market research by asking the class to choose a design that would fit the design brief and created our own monsters!



In Geography this term, we found out what it would be like to live by the coast. The children learnt what a coast line is and studied the seaside town of St Ives to see what human and physical features it has. They were surprised to find out it had 2 lighthouses and only two arcades. Also they spotted a harbour and a pier.



In Computing this term, we have been using stop motion to design a space themed animation. The children learnt about the history of flip books and then designed their own space-themed animation. They found out that to make a good animation the objects have to move very slightly with each image taken. They really enjoyed watching their rocket ships zoom across the screens.



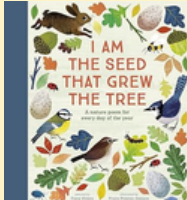
In maths, we started the term looking at fractions. The children used paper to make the different fractions including halves, thirds and quarters. They also learnt how to find a fraction of an amount. Then they moved on to time. They learnt that a clock can be split into quarters and how to read the clock in 5-minute intervals. We are very proud at how the children have been very resilient with a tricky topic.



Year 3 Term 5



Wessex Weekly



In our first book 'Africa, Amazing Africa' we explored the amazing continent, learning some interesting facts and the reasons behind author Atinuke's fascination with the countries that comprise it. In our second book 'I am the seed that grew the tree' we have explored multiple poems all about nature and the seasons. We have also enjoyed looking up the poems that represent our own birthdays as there is one for every day of the year! We have explored rhyming patterns and figurative language such as personification within the poems.

Our writing was inspired by 'Cinderella of the Nile' which culminated in the children's own versions of the Cinderella story. We also enjoyed reading 'Flotsam' then creating expanded noun phrases to describe the pictures in the book and writing a sequel.



In Maths, we started the term by looking at the topic of Time. The children used their previous knowledge to tell the time to the nearest 5 minutes and to read the time on a digital clock. We learned the use of am and pm, and how to calculate hours and minutes using durations.

Our Geography this term is based on settlements in our local area. We learned about OS maps and spotted how our local area has changed over time. We also looked at the physical and human features around Cox Green using Google Earth.



In PE lessons, we have had the pleasure of Mr Baker and his team teaching us athletics through games. We have learned how to increase our speed from a standing start, how to pass a relay baton successfully, how to get the best power for a standing long jump and how to throw javelins.

In our PSHCE Jigsaw lessons this term, we have been exploring the theme 'Relationships'. We have looked at our own family, friendships and being a global citizen. We have learned about our rights as a child and made posters all about these rights.



We have investigated lots of different factors that affect plant growth in Science such as air, water and light. We have also learned how water is transported in plants, the life cycle of a plant and how seeds are dispersed.

We are really enjoying our Art this term. We are learning how to transform 2D shapes into 3D structures and sculptures, exploring abstract shapes and space while developing skills in constructing 3D objects. We are building our own playground 3D structures using cardboard and paper, and applying different methods to assemble them.



Year 4 Term 5



Wessex Weekly



This term, our writing has taken us on an exciting journey of Unearthing Civilisations. Inspired by The Ever-Changing Earth and The Story of Tutankhamun, the children have explored a wide range of genres. They have written explanations about the Northern Lights, crafted poems, and created cyclical stories focusing on droughts and floods.

They have also produced detailed instructions on mummification, written diary entries, and even composed their own newspaper reports about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. To complete our unit, the children researched and wrote a biographical piece on Howard Carter, showcasing their understanding of his life, achievements, and the significance of his famous discovery.



This term, we have enjoyed reading one of the most popular children's books of the year, The Last Firefox. In the story, Charlie must discover his "inner fire" as he learns to look after a magical fox who can burst into flames at any moment. His courage is put to the test when he faces the monstrous Grendilock. The children particularly enjoyed exploring the story's repeating themes and discussing why the author uses them to build tension and show Charlie's growing confidence.



This term in Science, we have been learning about classification and habitats. The children discovered the role of a taxonomist and how they classify animals into groups. We explored the differences between vertebrates and invertebrates, and the children practised sorting living things using Carroll diagrams and branching keys, helping them build confidence with scientific grouping. We also investigated how seasonal changes can affect a habitat, and the pupils drew creative pieces from the viewpoint of a dormouse experiencing summer, winter, autumn and spring. We even did a spot of birdwatching in the environmental area, observing how different species use their surroundings. Our learning then moved on to the impact humans have on the natural world, where we researched issues such as plastic pollution, deforestation and coral bleaching, discussing what we can do to help protect our planet.



In PE, we are continuing to enjoy our weekly swimming lessons at Braywick, as well as developing our understanding of the key skills and rules of cricket. We rounded off our cricket unit with a fun game of French cricket, where the children challenged themselves to beat their own personal bests. This helped them explore how we can be competitive with ourselves in a positive way, using self-improvement as a motivator to build confidence and skill.

This term in Geography, our learning has centred around rivers. We began by exploring the water cycle, even creating our own working models to see the process in action. The children then learned about the many features of a river, including oxbow lakes, meanders, estuaries and tributaries. Using atlases, we located major rivers around the world before switching to Google Earth to zoom in on our local river, the Thames, following its journey from source to sea. We also investigated how rivers are used by humans and compared their physical and human features. To bring our learning to life, we took our Geography lessons outdoors, creating river-inspired artwork and working in teams to build our own model rivers using tinfoil.



This term, the children have really immersed themselves in their Art learning. They delved into print design, using the tropical rainforest as their inspiration to create detailed, nature-themed mood boards. The children practised sketching different animal features and experimented with a range of materials to develop their print ideas. They also explored the work of William Morris, learning how his designs influence modern printmaking. Using Batik glue and acrylic paint on fabric, the children applied these techniques to produce their own distinctive patterned prints.

Year 5 Term 5



Wessex Weekly



We are incredibly proud of all the children for their effort and enthusiasm during Term 5. They have demonstrated resilience, creativity and a positive attitude towards their learning. It has been a pleasure to see their confidence grow and their achievements this term—well done to everyone!

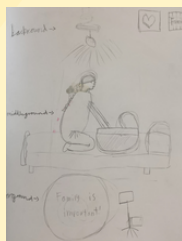


In writing lessons, we started with exploring the idea of creating a sequel to the book, 'The Island', with a focus on themes of hope and positivity. Children built on their understanding of the original story; they have imagined how the island and its characters might change for the better. Children have carefully developed their ideas, considering how kindness, cooperation and new beginnings could shape future events. This has been a fantastic opportunity for pupils to strengthen their narrative writing while conveying uplifting and thoughtful messages.



In our recent lessons, children have been writing biographies inspired by The Man Who Walked Between the Towers. They explored the life of Philippe Petit, learning about his determination, courage and creativity as a high-wire artist. Using the book as a starting point, children developed their skills in organising information and writing in a formal tone, while capturing key events from his life. This unit has helped pupils deepen their understanding of biography writing while being inspired by a truly remarkable true story.

Currently, we have been studying the book, 'Letters from the Lighthouse', The children have explored characters' feelings and motivations, making thoughtful inferences based on evidence from the text. They have also practised predicting events, summarising key moments, and discussing themes such as courage and resilience during wartime. The children have been developing their understanding of vocabulary by exploring the meaning of words in context. They have learnt to use clues from surrounding sentences to work out unfamiliar words, helping to strengthen their comprehension and confidence when reading independently. This has helped to strengthen their comprehension skills and deepen their engagement with the story.



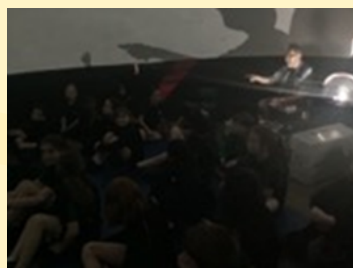
In Art, we explored, 'Drawing: Depth, Emotion and Movement' unit. Throughout this learning journey, children developed their drawing skills by experimenting with a range of techniques to create the illusion of depth and perspective, while also learning how artists use line, tone and composition to convey feelings and movement. The children studied different artistic styles and were encouraged to reflect on and discuss how emotion can be expressed visually, before applying these ideas in their own creative work.



Our dance lessons have been inspired by our Science topic of Earth and Space, with pupils using movement to represent planets, stars, and the solar system.

In Science, we have been exploring the fascinating topic of Earth and Space. The children have been learning about the movement of the Earth and other planets in our solar system, and how this creates day and night. They have investigated the phases of the moon and developed their understanding of how the sun, Earth and moon interact. Through engaging discussions and practical activities, the children built their scientific knowledge and curiosity about the universe around them.

We were delighted to welcome the WonderDome to school, supporting our Earth and Space topic. Children explored the solar system inside the immersive dome, bringing their learning to life in an engaging and memorable way.



In Maths, children have been developing their understanding of position and direction, including translation and coordinates. They have since moved on to learning about decimals, building confidence in place value and number skills.

Year 6

Term 5

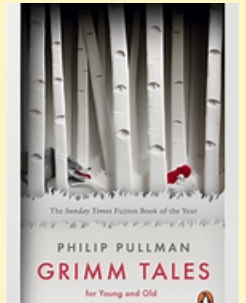


Wessex Weekly



Year 6 have had a hugely positive and rewarding term. After dedicating the opening weeks to revision, the children approached their SATs with resilience and maturity, showing just how much they have grown this year. We were incredibly impressed by their calm, focused attitudes and the way they embraced each challenge with confidence. We couldn't be prouder of everything they have achieved—well done, Year 6!

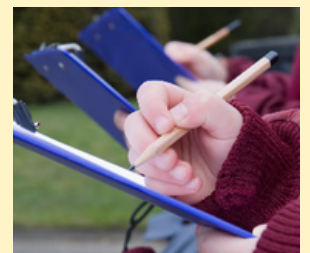
In English this term, we have placed a strong emphasis on developing key reading skills to support the children in their SATs revision, with a particular focus on comprehension, inference and vocabulary. Alongside this, Year 6 have been exploring the captivating collection Grimm Tales by Philip Pullman. Drawing on traditional fairy tales, these stories offer a darker and more sinister twist, which has really captured the children's imagination. The unexpected turns and eerie moments have made our reading sessions especially exciting, keeping everyone fully engaged throughout.



In Science this term, Year 6 have been learning about the circulatory system and the vital role it plays in keeping animals – including humans – healthy. We explored how the heart functions as a pump and looked closely at the different components of blood. To bring this to life, the children created their own “blood soup”, using a range of ingredients to represent red and white blood cells, platelets and plasma—an activity that was as memorable as it was messy!

The children also applied their understanding through writing, creating diary entries from the perspective of a red blood cell as it travelled around the body. This was a fantastic way to demonstrate their knowledge in a creative and engaging way. We also investigated how our lifestyle choices can impact our health, discussing a variety of real-life scenarios and suggesting ways to make positive changes. Looking at pictures of blood cells under a microscope helped to inspire some fantastic pastel artwork in the style of Andrew Mason.

In Geography, Year 6 have been busy carrying out their own independent fieldwork. They chose enquiry questions based on different areas around the school, including how spaces are used during OPAL play during lunchtimes, and designed their own methods of data collection, such as questionnaires, interviews and observations. This has been a fantastic opportunity for the children to work collaboratively, think critically and apply their learning in a real-life context.



In Art this term, Year 6 have been exploring the concept of memories as part of our Sculpture and 3D unit. The children have been learning how to represent meaningful moments through creative sculptures, using a variety of materials and techniques. They have developed their artistic skills by carefully planning, constructing and evaluating their work, making thoughtful choices throughout the process. It has been a wonderful opportunity for the children to express personal experiences through imaginative and impactful 3D artwork.

In PSHE this term, our learning has focused on relationships and how to recognise whether they are healthy and supportive. The children explored how relationships can impact mental wellbeing, understanding the importance of positive connections. We also discussed how some individuals may attempt to assert power or control over others, and developed strategies to respond confidently and manage these situations in a safe and respectful way.



HALF TERM EVENTS AT NORDEN FARM



YOU CHOOSE

Tues 26 May 11.30am and 2pm

An interactive musical show full of games for all the family! **Age guidance 2 - 7 years**

COMEDY CLUB 4 KIDS

Thur 28 May 2pm

Top comedians doing what they do best... but without the rude bits! **Age guidance 6+ years**



THE MAGIC FARAWAY TREE



Wed 27 May 11.30am and 2pm, Thur 28 May 11.30am and 2pm, Sat 30 May 5pm

THE SUPER MARIO GALAXY MOVIE



Fri 29 May 11.30am, Sat 30 May 11.30am

MRS H AND THE SINGALONG BAND

Fri 29 May 11.30am

Music and songs for all ages to enjoy. Bring your voices, silly dances and a sprinkling of mischief!

Age guidance 2+ years



ARTS AND CRAFT SESSIONS | FREE PARKING | CAFE BAR



Norden Farm

nordenfarm.org | 01628 788997
Altwood Road, Maidenhead, SL6 4PF



TUE 26 & WED 27 MAY 2026



09:30 - 15:00

**MAIDENHEAD RFC, BRAYWICK
PARK, SL6 1BN**

IN 2 TOUCH THAMES VALLEY

TOUCH RUGBY DEVELOPMENT CAMP

**£35 for 1 day
£60 for 2 days
10% sibling discount**



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COACHING TEAM

**Younger Groups: Y1-Y6
Older Groups: Y7-Y12**

Contact: sammie@in2touch.com