



Dear Parents and Carers

Here we are at the end of our first term back this year. It has been a long term with the term dates meaning there have been eight weeks but so much has been achieved in this time; it seems like such a long time ago that we were all returning from the summer break!

On a recent parent tour for prospective parents for 2025 reception classes, one parent remarked how settled the children in reception were having only been at school for one term. This was really lovely to hear as Mrs Corbett and the team pride themselves on ensuring that our new starters feel settled and learn the routines of the school quickly which then will allow the children to learn. It is hard to imagine that the confident children in reception were new to the school only a matter of weeks ago.

Other successes from this term include our very first sponsored Mini Marathon which raised much-appreciated funds for playground resources. Our Sports Leaders and Mrs Cox have begun to spend the money with some items already ordered.

We have continued to refine and develop our curriculum with more information now available on the school [website](#) relating to the different subjects that we teach. We also have our up to date curriculum maps on the year group pages. You will also find our Junior Leaders, House Captains and Sports Leaders who have been busy getting their teeth into their new roles at the school. The Junior Leaders have impressed our prospective new parents on their tours of the school

One change that we have seen this term is the introduction of the new PE kits. We have been really pleased to hear your feedback relating to the new kit. So many children and parents have reported to use that they love the kit and feel like it is more like a sport top than just a t shirt. Remember that you have until September 2025 to get some of the new kit for your child. As ever, if you know that getting uniform for your child will prove difficult financially, please do speak with us as we have links with charities who can help support uniform purchases for schools.

This week saw the official opening of the EYFS trim trail! Mark Russell from Victory Hall Trust joined the children to officially open the area by cutting the ribbon. It was an exciting opening ceremony and the children loved being the first to have a go on their new equipment! We are very grateful to the Victory Hall Trust for donating money towards the equipment. Don't forget that you can still contribute towards the Tesco blue tokens which hopefully will also provide funding to cover some of the costs too.

As ever, we are very grateful to Kirsty, Faye and the PTA team for the work they continue to do for the school. The welcome back BBQ was a huge success and set us up for a brilliant term. The break the rules day today has also been fabulous! We managed to raise £594.31. Thank you to everyone for your support with this

END OF TERM NEWSLETTER

We have worked hard over the first few weeks of term to establish key routines in our classrooms and around school so that day-to-day routines are embedded. Transitions for children leaving the carpet to return to tables are smooth, books are given out efficiently and pupils line up quickly and quietly. This is all on the back of our work with the Department for Education's behaviour hub last year. More information can be found on the [behaviour pages](#) of the school website.

We welcomed the NSPCC to school to help provide the key message of staying safe and speaking up if children feel things are not right. Also on the theme of safety, we had a parent workshop relating to mobile phone safety. A recording of this is available on our [school website](#) if you wanted to take a look. We had some very positive feedback from parents who attended so it is well worth your time having a look at this.

Our Character Curriculum sessions mainly had a focus on our school wide classroom expectations of Sitting, Looking, Listening, Thinking and Contributing. We have also spoken about holding doors open for people, greeting one another and asking how to join in a game if you want to play something that someone else is playing. It is so lovely to see so many children with a Wessex Way sticker for demonstrating these Character Traits.

Don't forget that Mrs Newman has recently launched the 500-word story competition, which we hope has captured the imagination of budding authors across the school. We look forward to reading the imaginative tales that pupils have crafted, and we are eager to celebrate their creativity and literary talents. More information and inspiration can be found on the BBC 500 word story competition [pages](#). Don't forget that we need to submit entries by Friday 8th so get them to us by Tuesday 5th please.

Our Talent Show is now less than two weeks away and Mrs Eves, Mrs Ashby and Mrs Powell have been busy with their pre-auditions. We had around 25 acts wishing to represent the school at the final at Furze Platt school on Saturday November 16th and we look forward to seeing the range of talents on display at the school talent show final on Thursday 8th November!

We hope you have a great half term holiday and look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday 5th November - remember that 4th November is an INSET day so only staff need attend.

Mr Beavan

Dates and reminders



Wessex Weekly



Positivity



Honesty



Respect



Pride

Diary dates coming up



Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November
HALF TERM

Monday 4th November
INSET day – pupils not to attend

Thursday 7th November
Prospective parent tour – 9.15 to 10.30am
Year 6 Road safety workshop
Wessex Talent Show – 3.30pm US hall

Monday 11th November
Anti Bullying Week
Remembrance Service – 10.50am

Good News Certificates



EYFS: Holly and Jude

Year 1: Ali Firaz and Kiara

Year 2: Joseph and Scarlett

Year 3: Abiya and Sonny

Year 4: Oscar and Olivia

Year 5: Aidan and Oliver

Year 6: Oliver and Aldrin

Attendance

Lower School: Ash & Alder Joint
Winners with 99.5%

Upper School: Holly
Winners with 98.3%

School attendance this week

95%

Yearly average is 95.0%

Aiming for 97%



Value of the week



Respect



Pride

This week's value has been shared between respect and pride. In assembly on Monday we talked about Diwali. We discussed why some religions and cultures celebrate Diwali and also how they celebrate it. We hope that all of our friends and families celebrating Diwali this coming week have a very special time with friends and family.

Homework feedback

There is still time for you to provide us with your thoughts relating to homework. As we have recently communicated, we have begun reviewing the homework that we send with a view to amount, content and screen use. We will hope to share our findings of this throughout term 2 with a view to making any changes for the beginning of term 3. We do wish to hear your views, so please do complete this very short survey.

Housepoint updates

It has been so lovely to see pupils from Years 1 and 2 being awarded housepoints for their work and efforts around school! We are very pleased to introduce housepoints in KS1. We can share the termly total points and announce that Lancaster house can wear their own clothes on Friday 8th November for their efforts!

York – 3,420
Lancaster – 3,613
Stuart – 3,256
Windsor – 3,217

Character Curriculum

This week's Character Trait was how to ask to join in games when other people are playing. So often on the playground, we see children trying to join in games without understanding the rules of the game or trying to join in whilst the current 'round' is underway. From having been on the playground this week, it has been a pleasure seeing children playing their games happily without incident.

Asking to join in games



- Find something to do.
- See if you can join in.
- Wait for the right time to ask.
- Understand you may not get your way.
- Be grateful to other people.
- Say thank you.
- Tell someone.



Parent Survey



Wessex Weekly



We had 105 responses to the survey after parents evening! Thank you to everyone who took time to share their views. It was great to see over 97% of respondents said their children are 'happy' or 'very happy' at school.

Children's books:

Feedback regarding the children's books was overwhelmingly positive. Key themes highlighted included the excellent presentation, high quality of both quality and content, and clear evidence of children's progress.



variety of subjects pride in the work pieces of work
proud of her work books **work** school variety of work
Lots of work children Work was lengthy
Excellent work level of work great good home Work that is exciting
children's work good and progress Brilliant work

The school's strengths:

The biggest theme from this feedback was the school's strong community feeling, highlighting the nurturing environment and commitment to wellbeing. It was great to see many positive comments about the academic focus and progress. Many also felt communication was a strength, acknowledging an improvement in this area.

'They are always made to feel valued and respected by their teachers.'

'Wessex has a great balance of nurture versus academic push.'

'The genuine love and care the staff have for the students.'

'My child is able to thrive.'

children relationship
children involved wessex school school values communication with parents
individual children nurturing care for the child
children proud teachers **children school** Great school
Sen Children staff environment for our children
Happy children school-children child is able child and his capabilities



How could the school improve:

An area identified was homework, with parents wanting to see greater consistency in both the type of homework and when it is set. As a school we are actively addressing these concerns to ensure homework is more consistently addressed across the school and look forward to sharing this with you soon.

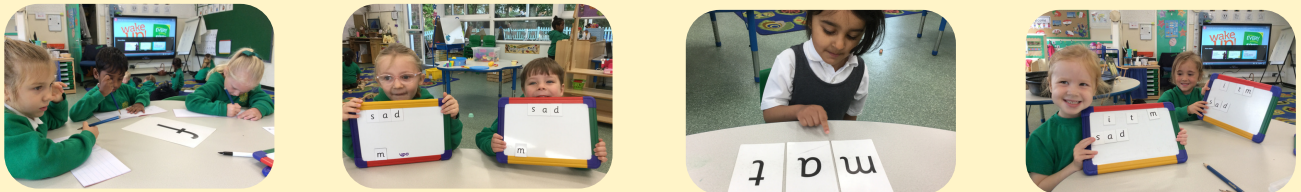
Thank you! We truly appreciate everyone's feedback; it is always welcomed and plays a vital role in helping us continue to grow and develop!



The children have had a super start to their school life. They are following new routines, made lots of new friends and explored Ash and Alder environments as well as all of our outdoor areas. We have been proud of how kind, caring and respectful the children are. Next term we are looking forward to introducing our School Values and values stickers.



The children are well on their way to becoming readers which is super exciting! We have met Fred the frog who is helping us to blend sounds together to make words and learn lots of new sounds. We use a rhyme to help us write each sound. Some of our Mummy and Daddys joined us for a lesson which we all enjoyed.



We have explored the season of autumn. We discussed what changes we could see outside to know that autumn was coming and went for walks around the school to hunt for things that told us it was autumn. We discussed the colours of autumn and mixed paint to create orange, red, yellow and green leaves which we added to our seasons tree.



We have been exploring our outdoor areas and have especially loved discovering the maze. We have found lots of different places to explore and discussed where different animals could live and make their own home. We were super lucky to have our new trim trail installed and have loved playing on it. We have been climbing, balancing, running and jumping. We have had lots of fun playing on it and improving our skills.

We have enjoyed learning about hedgehogs. We know that they are nocturnal and have also learned about other nocturnal animals. We have read about how hedgehogs prepare for hibernation and that they hibernate for 5 months! We were surprised by some facts such as hedgehogs can have up to 8000 spines! We made bread dough and shaped our rolls into hedgehogs! We used scissors to cut spikes all over their backs. The children took the bread rolls home and most seemed to enjoy eating them - including a cat apparently!



Thank you for the pumpkin donations! The children have loved exploring them and learning about how they grow. The children started by colouring them with pens and paint. They then went on to using small hammers to knock in golf tees. We cut into the pumpkins and put our hands inside - this inspired lots of interesting vocabulary! The children also had the chance to taste roasted pumpkin and pumpkin seeds.





We started the term with an awesome book, 'Cave Baby' where we read about a cheeky baby who enjoys painting funny animals on the walls! We extended our vocabulary by using adjectives to describe the characters and thinking about how they felt; we enjoyed practising 'wow words' using chalk on the playground.

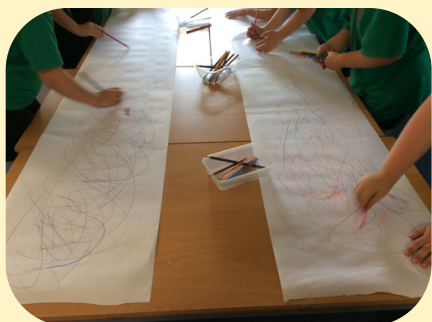
Later in the term, we arrived in class to find a backpack with lots of space things inside! This was the start of our second book, 'Astro Girl'. Through this text we've made predictions about a book, written instructions, interviewed an astronaut and written space facts for Astrid. Our teachers are SO proud of our writing!



In maths we've been practising our number skills – comparing and ordering numbers, counting using apparatus and number lines, reading numbers as words and finding different ways to make a number. We've also been working hard on forming numerals correctly.

In other subjects, we've explored maps, using a simple map to navigate around the school. We had a great time making our own messy maps.

We love art and had a fabulous time experimenting drawing different types of lines and exploring different mediums to create textures.



In computing we've begun learning about algorithms – we know these are instructions for computers and have to be clear or they won't work – just ask us about Teacher Robot making a jam sandwich!! We're very excited to put our knowledge to the test next term with BeeBot robots!

In Science we have been learning about the seasons. We learnt about typical weather for each season and watched how the school environment has changed during autumn, especially the trees and plants. We went into the Year 2 garden and harvested runner beans and tomatoes. We were fascinated by thermometers and used them to measure the temperature of water, ice and the air.

We had a lovely end to our first term exploring our outdoor environment this Wednesday. The weather was perfect as we completed a nature scavenger hunt, created artwork with natural objects and sketched woodland animals.





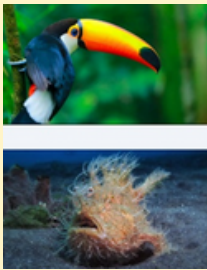
It has been a busy term in Year 2! We have settled into our new classrooms and have been working very hard.

At the start of the term we came into class and there were three bowls of porridge!

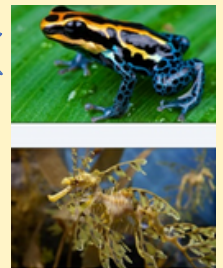
Two were full and one was empty. We realised that Goldilocks had been in our class and needed help to apologise to the Three Bears. We learnt how to write letters and also wrote a sequel to Goldilocks and the Three Bears.



There were some rumours flying around Maidenhead about wolves. Some people were saying that wolves blow down houses and that they eat Grandmas! We decided we needed to create a non-fiction leaflet to help people in Maidenhead know the truth about wolves. We read our finished work to children in reception.



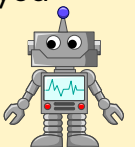
In Science we have been learning about different habitats. We have looked at woodland, ocean, rainforest and coastal habitats and learnt which animals live in them. We also learnt about producers, prey and predators. We have enjoyed learning about different new animals and why they're suited to live in their habitat. Ask us what these animals are and where they live.



In DT we made a stable chair for Baby Bear to sit on. We explored the stability of different shapes and tested different shapes to test their strength. The chair needed to be strong, stable, stiff and colourful, this was our design criteria. We made two different chairs, one made from pipe cleaners and straws and the other made from tape and paper.



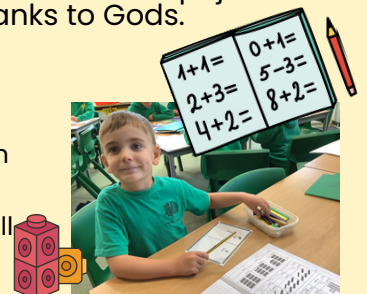
In Computing this term, we learnt about inputs and outputs. We designed our own robots that had buttons which when pressed, the robot would perform an output. Some of our imaginary robots could even do housework! We then went on a technology hunt to look for other machines in the school that performed outputs. We then learnt about how technology is used in a supermarket. We found out that shops have databases that track how much stock they have in and which items have been sold. We role played being in a shop and kept a log of what sold just like a computer would.



Our focus for RE this term was giving thanks. We learnt about why we should give thanks and how important it is to be thankful for what we have, when so many have so little. We heard prayers from the Christian and Muslim communities and focused on Harvest time and why it is important to say thanks when we receive food. We then learnt about puja and how people from the Hindu religion show their thanks to Gods.

THANK YOU

In maths we have been developing our understanding of place value. We have been working with numbers up to 100 and also learning how to write these in words. We can partition numbers into tens and ones. We have been learning number bonds to 10 and 20 and we are working hard to recall these quickly.

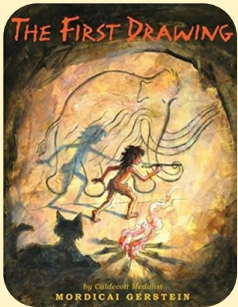




Year 3 have had a busy start to the year, getting used to being in Key Stage 2 and all that that entails through new routines, different areas to play and expectations for learning. We have had two very enjoyable books to start the term in our Reading lessons. Arthur and the Golden Rope saw us making predictions about Arthur and whether he would have the courage to go into the dark forest and battle Fenrir, the wolf. Our next story was equally exciting, and hilarious as we followed Mr Penguin on his adventures to find the lost treasure. We thoroughly enjoyed this - and the predicaments he got himself into - and out of with the help of his sidekick, Colin the spider.



Our English books for writing have taught us lots of new grammar, vocabulary and linked well to our History topic. In The First Drawing, we learned about a young Stone Age boy who had a brilliant imagination, and loved seeing animals everywhere he went - not only real ones, but in the clouds he watched across the sky, or stones he collected on the beach. Our second book has enabled us to learn about the present perfect tense, abstract nouns and use subheadings to create our own brochures advertising our own pet shop for the Imperfect Pets...beware parents, you may have a child keen to set up their own pet shop!



Studying pre-history from the Stone Age to the Iron Age has enabled us to understand how life changed as people learned to make tools, hunt and farm for their food. We studied artefacts discovered and learnt what these tell us about those who lived thousands of years ago.



In our Jigsaw topic this term we have focused on Me In My World; learning how to communicate well with our peers and be kind to those we meet. We also thought of things we are proud of, and made goals of what we would like to achieve before leaving Year 3.

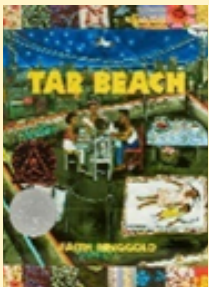
In PE lessons we have developed our balance skills - even attempting to play keepie uppie games with balloons on one leg! This has helped our balance when passing and receiving in Tag Rugby too, learning to always throw across our body whilst moving forward, a challenging skill to master! We also enjoyed learning new games at lunchtime from the Sports Leaders.



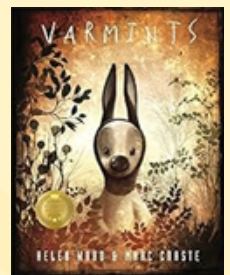
Holly and Hazel have been focusing on different topics in Science - Holly has studied Movement & Nutrition, learning about our muscles and the foods we need to grow; Hazel has learnt about Light & Shadows.



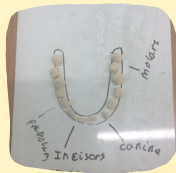
Year 4 have been working really hard this term. We have studied the books 'The Undeclared' and 'Zombierella' in reading, analysing the language and vocabulary used. We learned about black civil rights in 'The Undeclared', understanding the discrimination that activists such as Martin Luther King Jr fought against. We had great fun reading 'Zombierella' and compared it to the original Cinderella fairytale.



For our writing, we have studied 'Tar Beach' and 'Varmints'. The children have written their own playscripts which are on display in the corridors. They have used the sketching techniques with either charcoal or sketching pencils to make their own Varmint-inspired creatures. We discovered that the Secret Gardener had paid a visit to our outdoor classroom, leaving behind some seeds for us to grow in class.



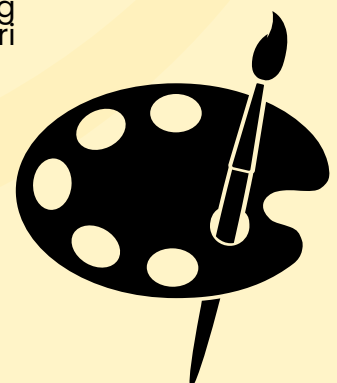
We have been getting stuck in with our Science topic of digestion and food. Investigations include: creating a model of the digestive system; whether the softness of a toothbrush affects brushing; making models of the types of teeth; creating food chains and seeing what clues we can get from poo.



In Geography, we have learned all about the Amazon rainforest. This topic included a walk to our local woodland to compare the uses of the two areas. We have discussed the important topic of deforestation and learned about how the indigenous peoples use the Amazon to survive. We have been lucky enough to welcome Jonathan's Jungle roadshow to school this week. He brought lots of rainforest animals to show the children. Lots of the children (and adults) got to touch the animals and some even overcame their fears.



The children have thoroughly enjoyed their Art lessons this term. They have learnt how to add tint and shade to their drawings to create depth and realism alongside playing with creative composition. They also learnt new techniques such as hatching, and wax-resist scratch drawing. Taking inspiration from artists such as Henry Moore, Georges Seurat and Henri Matisse, the children created a collaborated print.

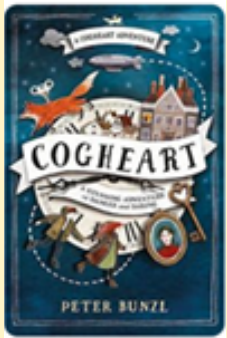
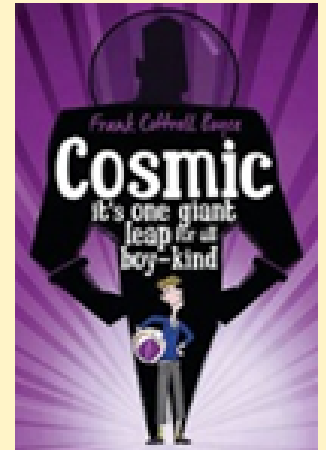




It has been a great start to Year 5! We are pleased of the way the children have settled into the year group and have embraced all of the new challenges that they have faced.



In literacy this term, we have been looking at an amazing historical event: Philippe Petit's tightrope performance as he crossed the Twin Towers. The children have been exploring this event and role-playing different scenarios to understand how he felt, what he might have been thinking, and the reactions from the general public. Throughout the term, we have written a series of newspaper articles, diary entries, letters, and a persuasive speech. With all this information, we have created a factual biography about his life.



In our reading lessons, we have enjoyed reading Cogheart, set in a reimagined Victorian London with zeppelins, mechs, vibrant characters and a feisty female lead. Finally, we have moved onto our new book, "Cosmic." We have been learning all about the troubles of being an above-average-sized child and the complications it might bring, like heading into space!

In maths this term, we have been working very hard on our first two topics of place value and addition and subtraction. We have been working on identifying numbers, rounding, and partitioning in place value. Once we worked on these fundamental skills, we started to apply them to addition and subtraction problems, ensuring that we are exchanging across columns effectively.

ADDITION		&	SUBTRACTION	
increased by	combine		deduct	less
add	plus	+	minus	difference
all together	sum		subtract	fewer than
	more than		decrease	take away

In History, we have been looking at an important historical man, Henry VIII! We started by looking at the difference between primary and secondary sources, and how we can use them to aid our research. We even managed to use some primary and secondary sources to help us solve a murder mystery around Anne Boleyn!



In computing this term, we have been looking at how we can best use search engines while keeping ourselves safe. We discovered what they do, how to use them, but most importantly how to do so safely! The children were very understanding of what they can do if they see something that worries them.



In Science, we have been looking at identifying different types of mixtures. We have looked at different types of solid-solid mixtures and understand that we can separate these mixtures using sieving methods. In the next half term, we will look at how we could use the sieves to rescue our precious gold nuggets! We will also learn about these mixtures and look at some very dirty water that needs to be filtered. We will use our newfound knowledge of sieves to help us in this process. We will create different-sized layers to try and clean this filthy water!

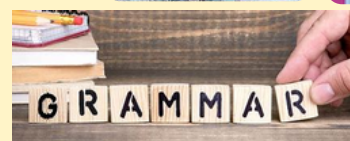
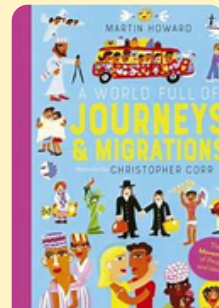
In DT, we have been looking at designing and creating our own doodlers using a simple motorised circuit to move and create a variety of patterns. The children enjoyed the challenge of being able to counter-balance the battery pack and the motor to allow the doodler to draw.



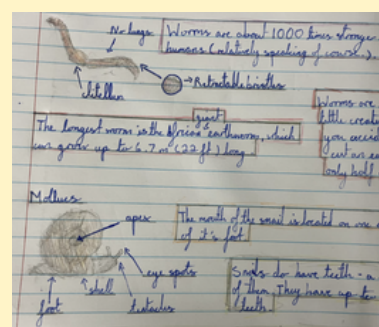


The children have made a great start to Year 6 and we are very proud of the way they have settled in with our expectations and having a positive mindset towards their work.

In our English lessons, we have enjoyed reading our class texts *Fly Me Home* and some of the stories in *A World Full of Journeys and Migrations*, where we have broken down comprehension questions to analyse the texts. Our main writing text this term has been *Leila and the Blue Fox* and the children have produced some fantastic writing, such as diary entries, letters, extended blogs and poetry, embedding the grammar features linked to the genre of writing.



In science, we have been studying classification of plants and animals where children have been able to broaden their knowledge of how vertebrates, invertebrates, plants and micro-organisms are grouped using shared characteristics. We have studied how Carl Linnaeus developed the Linnaean and binomial systems for classifying and naming living things. Children have used and produced branching and number classification keys to sort and identify organisms.

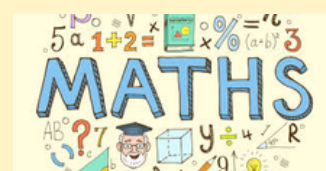


In Art, children have produced some amazing work. From the Ancient Maya to modern-day street art, we have looked at how artists convey a message. Exploring imagery, symbols, expressive mark making, and 'chiaroscuro' children have created powerful drawings to make their voices heard. Their final piece shows a message they wish to convey about who they are and includes techniques learnt in the unit.



In Geography this term, the children have been researching population and have investigated why certain parts of the world are more populated than others; exploring birth and death rates; discussing social, economic and environmental push and pull factors.

In music, the children have been appraising the work of Mendelssohn and further developing their improvisation and composition skills. They have been using musical vocabulary and experimenting with pitch and dynamics, understanding and taking on the role of conductor.



We have worked very hard in maths and have covered our 2 topics of place value and four operations in great detail as well as working on our arithmetic skills daily. The children have been exposed to practice SATs papers which we have gone through and broken down problem-solving questions, looking at key maths skills involved to answer them.