



Dear Parents and Carers

It doesn't seem like that long ago that we were finishing off the INSET day in September and enjoying the last of the summer weather. This term has flown by.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the staff team at the school for the hard work and effort they go to every single day for your children. Everyone has a role to play and I am very grateful for the nurture, care and attention that they give to the children each and every day. I truly hope you join me in wishing them a very restful half term.

There have been many exciting things happening in different year groups this term, which you will read about in the coming pages. Pleasingly, I overheard some Year 6 pupils talking to pupils from Year 4 about the books that Year 4 have been studying as part of their English Reading and Writing lessons. I am always amazed by the love for reading and books displayed by the children when it comes to our books chosen for our curriculum and each year that we teach the curriculum, more children engage with these great texts.

Also, our youngest children should take a bow. The way that they have settled into school life has been just marvelous. The confident children striding into school saying good morning as they enter is a world away from the children they were at nursery and pre-school. We couldn't be happier with the start that they have made.

This term has had a focus on excellence. From the very first day at school this year, children and teachers were sharing what excellence looks like. We like to have high expectations for the children as it is only then that they realise their full potential.

In the classrooms, there has been a focus on breaking down overall lesson learning objectives into smaller chunks throughout the lesson so that pupils can chunk their learning throughout the lesson. I am pleased that we had a colleague from a school in Reading join Mrs Newman this week looking at our writing curriculum. I am pleased to report that she praised the behaviour of pupils in lessons and their use of the Character Curriculum around school.

Our assemblies have had a focus on routines, organising ourselves for learning, Jewish and Hindu festivals alongside looking at the the rule of law linked to our British Values. Character curriculum traits have included greeting each other, using people's names when talking to each other, showing gratitude and appreciating talents to name a few. It is so heart warming to see children exhibiting the Character Curriculum around school, knowing that we are bringing up our children to be brilliant members of society.

Just this week, we announced the Year 6 pupils who will assume leadership roles this year following a rigorous application and interview process. Whilst this can be a difficult time for those pupils who were not successful, we have shared how they can turn this into a positive and learn from this experience. It is probably not the only time they will be disappointed, or not get chosen for something in their lives. What has been great to see has been the support from their peers to those who were chosen. We look forward to seeing you complete your roles to the best of your abilities in the weeks and months to come!

END OF TERM NEWSLETTER

As far as events and visitors go, there has been much to highlight and celebrate. In the very first full week, we had our PTA welcome back event which is always a lovely way to kickstart the school year, reconnect with friends and share stories of the summer.

We all enjoyed the sponsored mini marathon with pupils receiving recognition for being the fastest within the year groups. I'm sure that for any future cross country races this year we will know who to watch. Using the money raised from this event will be the newly elected Sports Leaders and Active 60 Leaders who will help Mrs Cox to choose some playground equipment for pupils to use at lunchtime.

We have seen Year 6 pupils complete a wonderful week at PGL with so many individual successes to share. Going away early in Year 6 can often allow for the cohort to gel and bond as pupils realise that Year 6 is a little different to other yeargroups. Adults and children share moments that wouldn't easily be possible in school and can use these shared celebrations and successes to help support the hard work and learning to come. Likewise, for pupils who did not attend, they enjoyed getting to know Mrs Harley, who, along with Mrs Hilbourne and Mrs Vee organised a wonderful week at school. Thanks, once again, to the staff who attended the PGL trip this year!

Whilst PGL was going on, the rest of the school were busy taking part in a 10@10 fitness challenge in a way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Also, along those lines, we have had pupils represent the school in netball, cricket and key sporting skills. Each child has represented the school very well and for this we are proud.

Relating to safety, we had almost 70% of pupils receive the flu immunisation nasal spray. We also hosted a meeting for parents of all ages keen to engage more with the smartphone free childhood pledge. We are pleased that parents recognise the pitfalls and perils of providing an internet device to their child. Also, Year 5 and 6 benefitted from a drama workshop relating to safe phone use at night. This led to children talking about pressure and the negative impact that using phones late at night can have.

Add to that, we have had our harvest collections for Maidenhead Foodshare and we very much look forward to the upcoming Talent Show tonight after school where we get to select the three acts who will represent the school in the Maidenhead Lions' grand final! Thanks to Mrs Eves, Mrs Ashby and Mrs Powell for putting together this event.

All that is left to say is that from everyone at Wessex, have a wonderful half term, use it to relax and unwind before gearing up for the second term of the year. It won't be long before all of the glitter comes out!

Have a great week,

Mr Beavan

Dates and reminders



Wessex Weekly



Positivity



Honesty



Respect



Pride

Diary dates coming up



Monday 27th October to Friday 31st October
HALF TERM

Monday 3rd November
INSET day - pupils not to attend

Tuesday 4th November
School starts 8.45am - 8.55am

Thursday 6th November
School tour - Prospective Parents FS2 - 9.15am

Friday 7th November
Mufti Day for House winners - WINDSOR

Monday 10th November
Y5 & Y6 - Prison Me No Way Workshop

Thank you, PTA

As ever, we find ourselves thanking the PTA. We all know how much effort goes into these wonderful events that they put on. Whilst we are saving some of the money raised for some larger investments later in the year, we have asked them to fund some wonderful new playground benches to help support KS1 pupils eating their snacks at breaktime. There is very limited seating area on the KS1 playground and so the PTA will be buying some eco-friendly benches, made purely from recycled material. We'll be sure to get a photo or two when they arrive. Today's Break the Rules Day raised a fabulous £335 to be added to the pot



Attendance

Lower School: Cherry
Winners with 97.6%

Upper School: Hazel
Winners with 98.8%

School attendance this week

93.4%



Last week = 94%
Last year average = 94.9%

Aiming for 97%

Value of the week



Pride

In assembly this week, we learned about Diwali, the Hindu festival of light. As the days grow darker, we reflected on how light can be a symbol of hope and strength, showing us that good can overcome challenges.

We chose pride as our school value, celebrating how children can be proud of who they are and the beliefs they hold. Diwali reminds us to shine brightly and be proud of our identity.

Housepoint updates

The new house captains' first job was to read out the final house points for this first term. Eager to please their house, Summer enjoyed announcing that WINDSOR had the most house points for this first term back. Many congratulations to them.

Windsor - 2195
Lancaster - 2134
Stuart - 2062
York - 1945

As a reward, WINDSOR house may wear Mufti on the first Friday back, 7th November.

Character Curriculum

This week, we looked at what to do if there is a disagreement in a game or with an idea in class. The main discussion point around this was keeping calm and accepting that we want different things. We also discussed how we can't always get our own way and sometimes we will need to compromise. The overarching message, however, was that no matter what, there are very willing adults to support the discussions and help to solve the problems, should they be needed.

What to do if someone doesn't want the same as you



- Stay calm
- Accept differences
- Find a solution
- Agree to disagree
- Compromise
- Talk through concerns and hear each other's views
- Get someone else to help solve the problem



EYFS Term 1



Wessex Weekly



The children have had a super start to their school life! They have learnt routines, made new friends and explored Ash and Alder classes as well as all our outdoor areas. The children are learning all about the school values and their meanings: honesty, positivity, respect and pride. We have already given out lots of stickers to children demonstrating the values. We are very proud of the positive start the children have made.



The children have spent lots of time getting to know adults and friends. They have shared who is important to them, all about their families and their likes and dislikes. The children have played lots of games to try and learn the names of everyone in Alder and Ash. The story of the Rainbow Fish helped us talk about what makes a good friend and the children worked as a team to create a beautiful collage.



Year 1 read the story 'Cave Baby' and rewrote the story all by themselves. They invited both classes to Y1 to read their stories to us. We really enjoyed listening to Cave Baby's adventure and meeting new friends in Year 1.



Children have been very observant in noticing the changes in the weather from summer to autumn. They have learned about trees losing their leaves and changing colour. They mixed primary colours to make autumn colours and have added beautiful painted leaves to a collective autumn display.

We spoke about harvest and learned a fun song about a scarecrow! The children learned about the ingredients needed to make bread and worked together to make their own bread dough. To fit in with our learning about animals in autumn, we made our bread rolls into hedgehogs! The feedback was that they tasted delicious! We have spent a lot of time reading in class, and a recent favourite was 'The Giant Jam Sandwich' where a community worked together to make a giant loaf of bread!



Many thanks for the donations of pumpkins! The children have had a fabulous time talking about them and exploring them. They have used small hammers to knock golf tees into them which helps to develop their fine motor skills. They have also decorated them using felt tips and paints. We cut the tops off some pumpkins so that the children could feel the stringy insides and collect the seeds. Some children were not keen on the smell! We roasted the seeds for the children to taste - ask your child if they tried one and enjoyed it!

Year 1 Term 1



Wessex Weekly



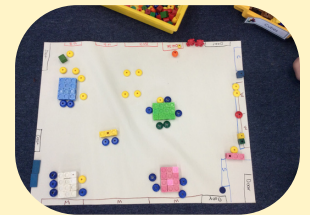
We started Year 1 with some super stories. 'Cave Baby' saw us drawing on the (cardboard!) walls then using adjectives to describe our animals. We've been working hard to make sure our sentences have full stops, finger spaces and capital letters and used these skills to re-write the story, which we then read to EYFS. Our 'Astro Girl' book zoomed us into space where we've been learning how to use a question mark to write questions. We were very excited to have an astronaut visit us to answer them!

In maths we've been using number lines and number tracks to count on and back from 20. We've also ordered numbers up to 30. We really enjoyed learning about more than, less than and equal to where a friendly crocodile helped us to remember that he gobbles up the larger numbers! All this and remembering to form our numbers correctly.

For PSHE we have been excited to meet Jigsaw Jack and begin our year understanding what rights and responsibilities are for being successful in our learning. We have discussed what we are proud of and things that make us happy.



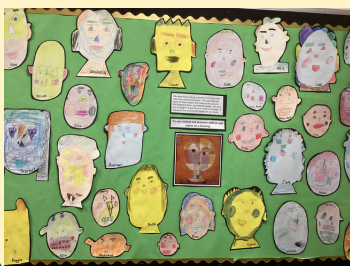
In Geography we been looking at maps and our school. We used Google Earth to find our school and could see the buildings, park and even the mile. We then created maps of our playground and created our own keys to find all the important features. Finally, we got the chance to survey what we liked and disliked in our playground and drew new maps of our improved playground. It has been lots of fun!



In Computing we have been learning about algorithms and how important it is to make sure we break down all the steps into small and clear instructions. We used algorithms to brush our teeth and to help get dressed correctly in the morning. We discovered that sometimes algorithms go wrong and these are called bugs! We learnt how to debug and to fix our algorithms.

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.

In RE we have started to explore the religion of Christianity, looking at some parables of Jesus. We have also discussed what a religion is and how we all have different beliefs. We know it is important to show respect to everyone. We had fun this week learning about Diwali and Bandhi Chhor and looking at some of the special clothes that are worn to celebrate the festivals.



The focus for art this term has been lines and shapes. We looked at the work of Paul Klee and drew over our photographs, outlining shapes. Then, we used shapes to create our own portraits in the style of Paul Klee.



Year 2 Term 1



Wessex Weekly



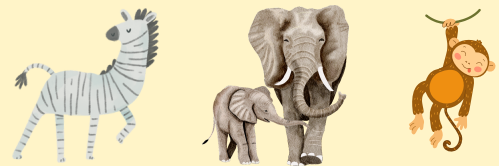
All children have settled well into Year 2 and have been demonstrating the Wessex Way brilliantly. The children have great attitudes to their learning and we have been busy exploring many topics.

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.



Following on with a fairytale theme we received a letter from Little Red Riding Hood stating that she needed help to understand if wolves were friendly or dangerous animals. We decided to help Little Red Riding Hood by creating an information leaflet so she could make an informed decision about wolves. Our information leaflets were so good that 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. The children explored different animal food chains and expanded their vocabulary learning key words such as producers, prey and predators. We have enjoyed learning about different new animals and why they're suited to live in their habitat. In addition, we explored what features a living thing has and debated if a balloon could be alive as it moves.

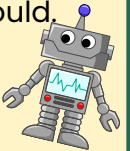


In DT we made a stable chair for Baby Bear to sit on. We explored the stability of different shapes and tested different shapes to test their strength. The chair needed to be strong, stable, stiff and colourful, this was our design criteria. We made our chair out of tape and paper.



Music this term has been based on a safari theme. We have been learning about call and response and how to use non-tuned percussion to answer calls. Children created a safari soundscape using dynamics.

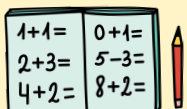
In Computing this term, we learnt about inputs and outputs. We designed our own robots that had buttons which when pressed, the robot would perform an output. Some of our imaginary robots could even do housework! We then went on a technology hunt to look for other machines in the school that performed 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.



We were very lucky to have the sports coaches this term. They helped us to learn cricket skills such as batting and underarm bowling in a variety of game based challenges. We practised our throwing and catching skills and communicated as a team when fielding.



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.



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 have discovered number bonds to 20 and have been looking for patterns in fact families. Towards the end of the term we have been adding and subtracting 10 and using 10 grids to add 3 numbers.



Year 3 Term 1



Wessex Weekly



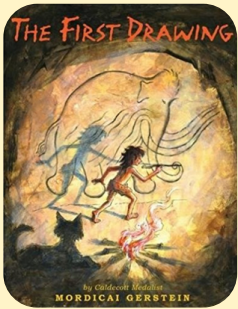
In Year 3, we have really enjoyed our first two Reading books this term.

Our first book was Arthur and the Golden Rope which saw us making predictions about a small boy called Arthur who embarks on a magical adventure to try and rescue his village from a mythical 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 knowledge of history. In The First Drawing, we learned about a young Stone Age boy who had a brilliant imagination, and loved seeing animals everywhere he went - his family were more practical so he taught them what he sees and how to draw. 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. We learned the message from Barnabus that nothing is impossible...



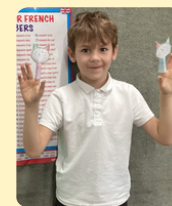
In Geography, we have been studying Antarctica. We have learned what lines of latitude and longitude are, the physical features of Antarctica, what it is used for today and the famous explorer Ernest Shackleton. We ended the unit with planning our own expeditions around the school using the 8 points of a compass.



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-uffie 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 have also worked on our footwork during Real P.E. including sidesteps, skipping and hopscotch.

We have been learning all about movement and nutrition in Science. We learned about how important our skeleton and muscles are and that we need energy to move. We have learned about the 7 nutrient groups and what makes a balanced diet.



Holly and Hazel have really enjoyed Art this term - learning to shade using different techniques as well as looking at colours outside and sketching and painting flowers.

Year 4 Term 1



Wessex Weekly



Year Four have made a fantastic start to the year! We have been working hard to establish new classroom routines and immerse ourselves in all our new topics and books.

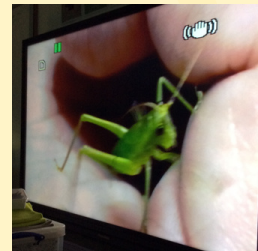
We started off the year with the story *Tar Beach*. This inspiring book supported our English reading lessons and amplified the importance of standing up for what you believe in, as well as the power of having dreams. It led to some fantastic discussions and creative work. The children wrote their own play scripts, learning how to structure their writing and include stage directions effectively.

In English reading, we began the term with a powerful poem called *The Undefeated*. This moving piece sparked thoughtful discussions around equality and the importance of standing up for what you believe in, no matter the colour of your skin. We learned about many inspirational Black Americans who paved the way for change and equal rights.

Next, in writing, we moved on to the dystopian novel *Varmints*. This book explores themes of nature and pollution, encouraging us to reflect on how we can protect our world. We also explored nature in real life, wrote about how to care for and grow plants, and even created our own speeches using command sentences and the present perfect tense. Lastly, our second reading book of the year was the fantastically gross and funny story *Zombierella* – a spooky twist on the classic fairytale, full of hilariously unexpected turns. We used our comprehension skills to deepen our understanding of the text and analysed how the author used creepy, descriptive language to bring the story to life.

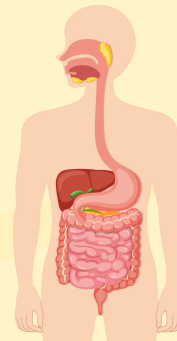
In Geography this term, we have been learning all about the Amazon Rainforest.

We focused on the four layers of the rainforest and explored the different plants and animals that live in each one. We also discovered the many products that come from the rainforest and discussed ways we can help protect this vital environment for the future.



We were extremely lucky to have a visit from Jonathan's Roadshow, who brought along an amazing selection of rainforest animals!

The children had the chance to meet a variety of fascinating creatures, including millipedes, a tarantula, a whole family of katydids, a gecko, and Pele – the beautiful Brazilian rainbow boa.



In Art, we have been exploring tone, texture, and proportion. We studied the work of Beatriz Milhazes, focusing on her vibrant use of collage, as well as Sarah Graham, whose artwork showcases incredible realism. We also looked at Nicola McBride and explored how she uses layers to create depth and interest in her pieces. These artists have inspired us to experiment with different techniques and develop our own creative styles.



In Science, we have been learning all about the digestive system. We began the term by exploring the human digestive system, including a close look at both adult and animal teeth. We discovered how teeth can vary depending on diet, which led us to explore the differences between herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores. We also investigated food chains and how changes in these can affect animal populations. Throughout the topic, we took part in lots of fun (and messy!) experiments to help support and deepen our learning.

Year 5 Term 1



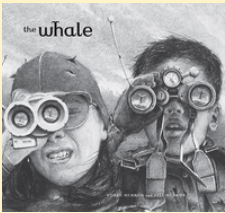
Wessex Weekly



What a fantastic start to Year 5! We are pleased with how the children have settled into the year group and have embraced all the new challenges with immense positivity.



In our Writing lessons this term, the children investigated the mystery of the stolen happy endings, linked clues identified with known fairy tales and characters. They wrote predictions about the main character Jub, before exploring figurative language to write a poem. We explored the author's use of language to portray the character of the witch and took part in role play to generate ideas for recording a section of dialogue. The sequence of learning finished with children delving into the character of the witch, using their inference skills to write a prequel to explain the backstory of the witch and the reasons she committed the terrible crime of stealing the happy endings.

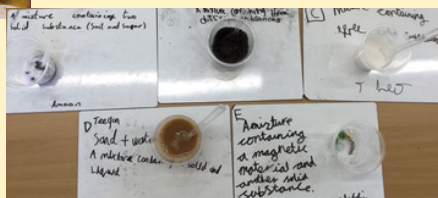


For 'The Whale' wordless book, we followed the adventures of two children trying to make a possible sighting of the Great Spotted Whale, and proving the sighting 50 years ago was indeed not a hoax by their grandparents. We captured their emotions and sensory experiences and, when the two boats collided in a storm, their thoughts and conversation. We finished our learning by writing a film pitch for The Whale, focusing on vividly capturing the setting, atmosphere and emotions to secure funding to make the movie.

With our reading book, 'Cogheart' the child had the opportunity to make predictions, explore the author's choice of vocabulary, as well as develop their skills of inference. Lily's life was in mortal peril. Her father had been missing and now silver-eyed men stalked her through the shadows. What could they want from her? With her friends - Robert, the clockmaker's son, and Malkin, her mechanical fox - Lily is plunged into a murky and menacing world. The children enjoyed the murder, mayhem and mystery in this gripping Victorian adventure.



With our second book, 'Cosmic' we explored the many adventures of the main character Liam, unusually tall for his age and how he is tasked with having to act as an adult during the many short chapters. We are immersed very quickly into the seemingly implausible plot. There were many opportunities to retrieve information as well as infer, looking in particular at the vocabulary the author used.



In Science, we have been investigating 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. We learnt how dirty water can 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 Art this term, children developed skills to create interesting portrait drawings using words, experimenting with materials and techniques and constructing self-portraits that represent aspects of themselves using mixed media, inspired by the artist 'Chila Kumari Singh Burman'.



Maths this term started with place value, identifying the value of each digits in a 5 digit number, rounding numbers and partitioning numbers using the standard and non-standard form. With 'Addition and Subtraction', we explored formal methods to add and subtract, comparing and ordering numbers. 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.

Year 6 Term 1

Wessex Weekly



The children have made an excellent start to Year 6, and we are very proud of how well they have adapted to our expectations and approached their learning with such a positive attitude. It has been jam packed with PGL as well as becoming accustomed to being the leaders and role models at Wessex. The children who went to Osmington Bay had an amazing week and enjoyed everything from Cluedo in the dark, to Raft building and problem solving, abseiling and the giant swing - and returned with an increased confidence in what they can achieve. Those who stayed at Wessex got creative, making beautiful pencil cases, pottery and delicious cookies.

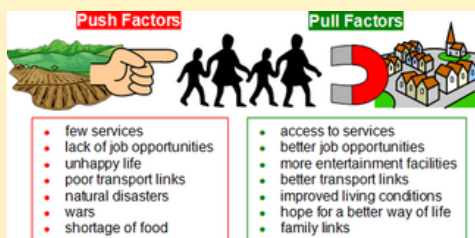
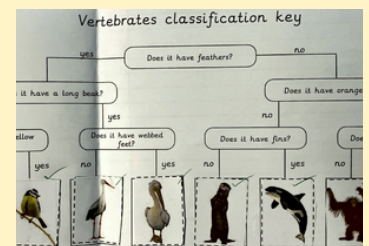
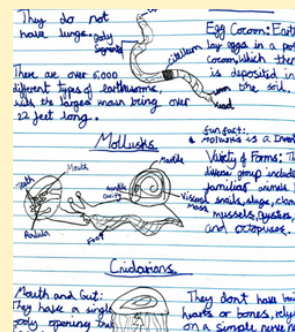


We have worked very hard in maths this term, covering our two main topics – place value and the four operations – in great depth, while continuing to strengthen our arithmetic skills through daily practice. The children have also been introduced to practice SATs papers to familiarise themselves with the format and to refine the key skills and strategies needed to answer questions effectively. They are developing a strong understanding of how vital times tables are and how they underpin many areas of maths. We strongly encourage continued practice of any times tables that are not yet fully secure at home.



In our English lessons, we have thoroughly enjoyed exploring our class texts *Fly Me Home* and *A World Full of Journeys and Migrations*. Through these stories, the children have developed their comprehension skills by analysing key themes and responding to thought-provoking questions. Our main writing focus this term has been *Leila and the Blue Fox*, which has inspired some fantastic pieces of work, including diary entries, letters, extended blogs, and poetry. The children have successfully embedded a range of grammar features suited to each writing genre.

In science this term, we have been exploring how living things can be grouped and classified. The children have developed a deeper understanding of how vertebrates, invertebrates, plants, and micro-organisms share characteristics that help scientists organise them. We also learned about Carl Linnaeus and his influential Linnaean and binomial systems for naming and classifying species. Using this knowledge, the children created their own branching and numerical classification keys to sort and identify a range of organisms.



In Geography this term, the children have been studying population. They have explored why some areas of the world are more densely populated than others, examined birth and death rates, and investigated the social, economic, and environmental push and pull factors that influence migration and settlement patterns, which has linked in well with themes in our class texts.



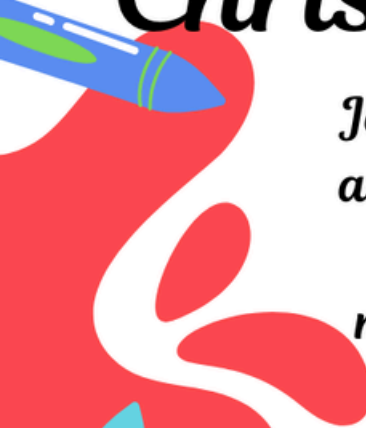
In art, the children have explored key features of street art and murals, considering their intention and impact. They have developed their skills, using techniques such as one-point perspective and grid enlargement to create accurate and visually engaging designs.





In PE, the children have been enjoying Quidditch, Netball and Hockey, developing their teamwork, coordination, and strategic thinking as they pass, dodge, and score points in this fun, inclusive sport.





Christmas card competition



Josh Reynolds our MP for Maidenhead has asked that we find a budding artist to create his Christmas card for him this year that really captures the essence of Christmas in Maidenhead.



The winning entry is personally chosen by the MP and will be printed and sent out with Christmas wishes to people across Maidenhead as well as politicians, royalty, and leaders across the world.



The suggested size is A5. Designs need to be bold and bright and preferably done in paint, felt tips or crayons as coloured pencils do not reproduce well when printed. Two-dimensional designs are preferred as materials like glitter and cotton wool do not work when printed



Entries for the competition should be marked 'Josh Reynold's Christmas Card Competition' and sent to Maidenhead Advertiser, 48 Bell Street, Maidenhead, SL6 1HX.



**Don't forget your name,
age and school**



Flying High: 150 Years of Birds and Beaks

Free family activities and birds of prey shows at Eton's Natural History Museum, celebrating the museums 150th anniversary.

Join us for a fun range of half term family activities at the Natural History Museum on the 30th October.

The museum will be open 1 – 4 pm.

Free entry – no need to book.

For more information, visit: <https://collections.etoncollege.com/whats-on/events/11036/>

Natural History Museum, Eton College, South Meadow Lane, Windsor SL4 6ES