

Dear Parents and Carers

As we reach the end of this half term, it has been wonderful to share in the children's creativity and see just how much has been happening across the school!

From the fantastic Falcon Class dance performance at the Dance Festival to Woodpecker Class beginning their ukulele lessons, creativity has truly been at the heart of learning. Kingfisher Class showcased their artistic talents with their very own art gallery, while Heron Class brought their studies of Carl Linnaeus and Charles Darwin to life with a visit from Longleat, as well as taking on the challenge of Bikeability.

Robin Class stepped back in time with their exploration of Gillingham Museum, while Wren Class discovered the wonderful world of books during their visit to Gillingham Library. Owl Class have been investigating vehicles—both through an exciting trip to the Haynes Motor Museum and by designing and creating their own!

A highlight for the whole school was the visit from poet Kev Payne, who inspired so many of our budding poets, authors, and illustrators. It has been fantastic to see children bringing in their own self-published stories and poems, showing their passion for creativity beyond the classroom!

January and February can sometimes feel a little bleak, but I am so grateful to work in a school that is anything but! Thank you to our incredible staff, our wonderful children, and all of you for making this term so vibrant, engaging, and purposeful. A special thank you also to the Friends of the School for putting on such a lively and fun-filled School Disco last week! Wishing you all a well-deserved and restful half-term break—I look forward to the warmer months ahead!

Kind regards

Ed Birkett



KINGFISHER CLASS NEWS

We have had another very busy half term in Kingfisher Class!

We have LOVED this enquiry entitled 'What is the difference between surviving and being healthy?'

Our lead state of being in this enquiry has been being an artist. We have explored a number of different artists such as Andy Warhol (the style of Pop Art) and Itsuo Kobayashi (who painted every meal he made, for 25 years!), before attempting our own pieces of art in these styles. We also learnt the skills of collage, ink block printing, colour mixing, sketching to create tone and using watercolours. Our enquiry challenge was to put on an art exhibition showcase, which we invited our families to come and see. It was wonderful to invite everyone into school, thank you so much for coming.



We have been finding out about what our body needs to be healthy, starting with a balanced diet. We found out about the five food groups and how each food group gives us something different that our body needs. After a lot of research we wrote some non-chronological reports to explain how we can keep our bodies healthy. Along with a balanced diet, we also wrote about getting enough sleep, keeping hydrated and brushing our teeth twice a day.

We celebrated children's mental health week at the end of term taking some time to think about what really makes us happy. We then wrote our own recipes for happiness.

In maths we have been learning about measuring length and height. We began by being introduced to mm, cm and m and had a go at measuring using these units. We are all now experts at measuring accurately in cm and mm using a ruler!

All in all it has been a jam-packed half term and we are really proud of the children's progress, resilience and attitude to learning. We wish you all a very happy half term and a well-deserved rest!

Mrs Abbott, Mrs Simpson, Miss Long, Mrs Marchlewicz and Miss Pollard



HERON CLASS NEWS

It has been another busy half term in Heron Class and Year 6 have continued to work hard and demonstrate their resilience. Our Enquiry topic, "Linnaeus and Darwin - what connects them?" has enabled the class to look in depth at The Theory of Evolution, fossils, adaptations and classification and we also had a visit from Longleat Safari Park and took part in lots of fun activities to help us understand how evolution works. In one session, we pretended we were finches on the Galapagos Islands, all with different shaped beaks. Our task was to gather food and think about how easy or difficult this was depending on whether or not we had a well adapted beak! In English, we have written some lovely pieces this half term including a narrative description of The Galapagos Islands in the style of David Attenborough, together with a biography of Charles Darwin's life.



In Maths, we have continued to make great progress with arithmetic and have consolidated our knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages. We have also practised using our Mathematical vocabulary to explain our thinking on our "Problem solving Fridays!" Number day was also great fun when we had the opportunity to take part in a variety of maths games and activities.

Many of the class took part in Bikeability this half term and were complimented on their behaviour and manners by the instructor. We hope that everyone continues to practise these skills in the coming weeks.

To top it all off, we were successful in the Gillingham Schools hockey tournament with our Year 6 team beating 8 other teams to be crowned champions! A huge well done to all involved.

We have lots to look forward to next term including a trip to both Bristol and London, together with lots more exciting activities in school.

Enjoy a restful half term Heron Class!



OWL CLASS NEWS

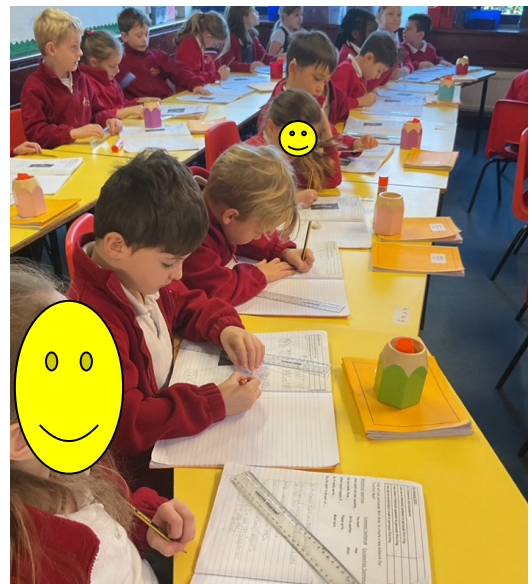
We are reaching the end of another busy term in Owls. All the children have been working extremely hard with their learning.

In our first enquiry this term, 'How will we get around in the future?', the children have been scientists, geographers and engineers. They have enjoyed looking at transport from the past, and had the opportunity to design and make their own transport to travel either by air or sea. They planned and plotted a route across lots of different countries. We had a fantastic trip to Haynes Motor Museum, learning a lot about different modes of transport. Following on from that our next enquiry, 'How can we help?' has encouraged the children to think about what a role model is, and what makes a good role model. They really enjoyed creating storyboard as their final challenge.

We are coming to the end of our Multiplication and Division topic. It has encouraged the children to think of methods such as grouping and sharing, as well as answer number sentences including the multiplication and division symbol. They have worked extremely hard, as this can be a tricky learning.

Traction Man by Mini Grey has been our class book this term. We have loved learning the story of how Traction Man defeats the poisonous dishcloth, evil pillow or Dr Spade! They created, drew and described their own sidekick. They really enjoyed writing a letter to Mini Grey to try and persuade her to use their own sidekick in one of her new books.

Thank you for another fantastic term Owl Class! Keep up the amazing work.



FALCON CLASS NEWS

Falcon Class have had a very busy start to the Spring term! For our enquiry 'How can Science help the vulnerable?' we have been Scientists and Engineers, and have been exploring properties of materials and learning all about reversible and irreversible changes. This has involved lots of fun practical investigations and observations - including an afternoon at the fire pit observing what happens when wood



burns! We were also very lucky to have a workshop with a volunteer from 'Shelterbox' - a charity that provides survival kits to refugees or people who have had to leave their homes. We were able to handle the kits and learn how each aid item supports vulnerable people. This inspired us to design our own piece of equipment for refugees or homeless people. The children created some well thought out product designs, such as coats that turn into sleeping bags, water bottles with in built-in filters, and multi-purpose survival tools.

As Authors, we have been reading a range of fiction and non-fiction texts about refugees and migrants (and have learned all about the different types of migration). As Writers, we imagined that a refugee child had joined our class and wrote a diary entry all about this. We have been learning how to use relative clauses and parentheses to add extra information to our writing, and the children worked really hard to include these in their diary entries. More recently, we have been writing a portal story in which our main character finds themselves transported into a story book!

As Mathematicians, we have been learning to use about multiplication and division, including exploring formal written methods as well as mental strategies. We are now looking at fractions and have been learning how to multiply fractions and mixed numbers.

In our PE sessions this term, we were lucky enough to have a visiting dance teacher who taught us a fantastic football themed routine for a dance festival at Mere Primary School. All the children impressed us with their resilience - there were many tricky steps to learn! - and it was lovely to watch their confidence grow over the weeks. At the festival, we shared our dance with several other classes from different schools, and the children showed great sportsmanship while respectfully watching and supporting the other children, as well as huge amounts of resilience performing in front of a big audience. Well done Falcon Class!



WOODPECKER CLASS NEWS

This half term, our enquiry has been 'How Do We Switch Off?' This is always one of our most popular enquiries as we get to experiment with wires, batteries, switches, bulbs and buzzers! We have discovered how to make a simple series circuit and explored which materials are insulators and conductors.

We also made our own switches using materials we found in the classroom.

Our final challenge has been to make a working burglar alarm which has been lots of fun and a bit puzzling at times!



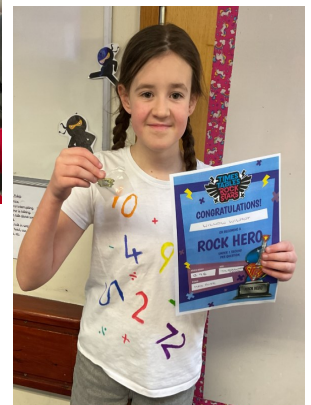
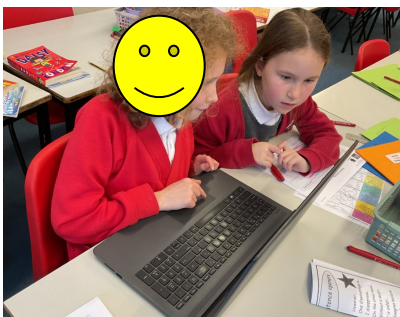
This half term has been full of events! We LOVED our visit from Kev Payne and we were all inspired to write fabulous poems. We also had a great Number Day with our first Year Four Times Tables Rock Stars Rock Hero status being awarded.

In Computing, we have been learning to make podcasts. We have used the program Audacity to learn to record our voices, layer sounds and add sounds and jingles! Our own Wyke Primary podcasts were lots of fun to listen to.

We have also been lucky enough to be learning the ukulele with Mrs Ely from Dorset Music Service. We have already learnt a few tunes and we now know how to do the 'thumb brush strum!'

Wishing you a super half term and we look forward to an action packed Spring Two!

Mrs Turner and Miss Sheere



Spring 2025

#003

WREN CLASS NEWS

What a wonderfully busy term we have had in Wren Class.

We've had three mini-enquiries this term, starting with 'What is Winter?'. This was lots of fun and very well timed with the cold weather snap! We enjoyed exploring ice and managed to play in some falling snow - even though none settled. We made our own 'snow' in class which was almost as much fun!



Our next enquiry was 'What stories do we know?' and we loved enjoying stories in all kinds of ways - from books to puppet shows to storytelling with no book or props just, as described by one of our Wrens, 'with the pictures in our heads'. The children loved learning lots of traditional tales - The Gingerbread Man being a favourite.

We baked our own gingerbread men and couldn't believe it when they disappeared! The school CCTV caught them escaping from the kitchen! They left us a trail of clues to decipher... We eventually tracked them down and gobbled them up quickly before they could escape again!

During this enquiry the children have loved discovering non-fiction books and finding out that not all books are stories! Our enquiry ended with a visit to a place full of stories - the town library. We had a wonderful morning there and the children are hoping to return with their families soon.

We ended the half term with a mini enquiry finding out all about the Lunar New Year and comparing it to our own New Year celebrations.

Chinese/Lunar New Year sounds like so much fun. We have had a Chinese Restaurant in our classroom, lots of beautiful Chinese Costumes to wear and we've enjoyed learning how to do a dragon dance and made dragon puppets. We even had a dragon visit our classroom and we helped her to find her stolen dragon egg - it was very exciting!

We cannot believe our Wrens are already half way through their first year of school! They are making amazing steps forward in their learning and it's a joy to be part of their journey! We are very much looking forward to Spring and Summer, with some (hopefully) warmer days and lots of learning!

Have a great half term everyone!

Mrs de Villiers, Mrs Turvey, Mrs Jones and Mrs Marchlewicz



Spring 2025

#003

ROBIN CLASS NEWS

Wow, what another amazing half term! Our Curious City enquiry has been 'Who helps who?'. We have enjoyed lots of visitors who talked with us about their jobs where they help other people. Mrs Garratt told us about being a Maternity HCA and a nanny, PC Craig told us about being a Police Officer, Corporal Gilbert is in the RAF as a medic and Fire fighter Porritt bought a bag of interesting things for us to look at that he uses as a firefighter. We also had a visit from Felicity who is a nurse at Gillingham Practice – we loved being bandaged up by her! Our final visitor, the fire service, visited us this morning where we were able to look around a fire engine and find out even about being a fire fighter and in the fire service. It was very exciting!



As well as finding out about the fire service now, we have also been finding out about what the fire service was like in the past. As Historians, we have looked at photographs of fire engines from the past and recent past and compared them to fire engines now. We also went for a visit to Gillingham Museum where there is a fire engine from 1790. This was very different to the fire engines we see in the present – it was pulled by horses and water was collected and stored in buckets within the main part of the engine. Mr Porter, the curator at the museum, told us it took 8 men to pump the fire engine and if you had not paid your fire tax they would not come to your house if it was on fire! We learned that there was a big fire in Gillingham in 1694 which destroyed much of the town.



We have really enjoyed computing this term. We have been digital artists and have been using an app called Paintz to recreate art in the style of famous artists. Some of the art has been abstract, some has been real. We liked exploring the different tools to see what effects we could create in our art.



We have continued to work really hard in our Phonics groups and the progress is really showing. Our confidence in reading very tricky words is amazing! This is also really helping when we are writing our brilliant sentences in Curious Quests.

It has been a very busy time for us all and I am sure we will all be glad to have a week to rest and catch up ready for the next half term!

Well done Robins, you have been amazing!

Mrs Beales, Miss Bryan and Mrs Scammell





UK Health
Security
Agency



Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.