



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our first newsletter of the year! A huge welcome to all our new families and a warm welcome back to everyone returning. There's so much to share, so apologies if I miss anything; it's been a busy start to the term!

It was lovely to welcome parents and carers into school last week for our first Parents' Evenings. Thank you for supporting your children, it's always wonderful to chat with their class teachers early in the year and celebrate their achievements so far.

Congratulations to our new Year 5 Sports Ambassadors, who completed their training at Gillingham School. They'll now join our Year 6 Ambassadors and are excited to run games and sporting activities at lunchtime and playtime. A big thank you also goes to Year 6 pupils running lunchtime clubs like Lego, dance, and music. These clubs are always popular and often oversubscribed, your energy and creativity make a big difference!

It was lovely to accompany Woodpecker and Falcon Classes on their trip to "We the Curious" in Bristol. The children enthusiastically enjoyed the exhibits and workshops, bringing their learning to life outside the classroom. Earlier in the term, our Heron Class challenged themselves at PGL in Osmington Bay. They showed amazing determination, resilience and grit completing the activities. Huge thanks to Mrs Rose and Mrs Hall for giving up their time to support the trip!

Great news! Our new play area equipment has been ordered following the School Council's selection of their favourite design. We are hopeful it will be installed before the end of term, it's going to be a fantastic addition! A huge thank you to Friends of the School and the whole school community for making this possible through their fantastic fundraising efforts. Achieving this in just a year is a great tribute to all the hard work and commitment from everyone involved.

I would like to thank our wonderful teachers and staff, who work tirelessly every day to support and inspire our children. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated team, and their hard work makes everything we do at school possible.

As you'll see from the class articles below, there's been so much fun and learning this term that the children are sure to need a well-deserved rest over the half-term break. Take care, enjoy a lovely half-term, and we look forward to seeing everyone back in November for another exciting term!

Kind regards,

*Ed Birkett*  
Headteacher



**Autumn 2025****#001****BLESS YOU!**

You truly blew us away today with your incredible support for our tissue appeal! Thanks to your generosity, this year's sniffles and will be met with soft comfort, and messy moments will be handled with care.

**CHRISTMAS DINNER & CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY—11TH DECEMBER**

We thought you might appreciate advanced notice of Christmas Dinner Day and Christmas Jumper Day which will take place on **Thursday 11th December**.

Children are invited to wear a festive jumper with school uniform on this day. Please note, there is no need to purchase a jumper—feel free to get creative and make your own if you'd like! Don't forget the Friends' upcoming Christmas Jumper Sale—more details coming soon!



**The cut-off for ordering Christmas Dinner through Chartwells is Sunday November 23rd.** Children who bring a packed lunch are welcome to bring a more festive lunchbox on this day, should they wish.

**FLU VACCINATION REMINDER**

Just a reminder that you are now able to book your child's NHS flu vaccination. The immunisation session will take place on 27th November and the cut-off for completing the online consent form is **24th November**.

<https://www.schoolimmunisation.dhc.nhs.uk/Forms/Flu> You will be asked for a code, which is DT113743. Full details have been sent via Arbor and will be available on our website shortly.

**BIKEABILITY**

A big thank you to Ben from Bikeability who has spent this week with Year 6 and Year 5 children teaching them the skills and confidence to cycle on today's roads.

**VERY IMPORTANT—NUTS & GRAPES**

A reminder please that we are a **NUT-FREE SCHOOL**. Please do not send your child to school with any nuts or products containing nuts, including chocolate spread.



We have children in school who suffer from potentially life-threatening anaphylaxis if they come into contact with nuts or nut dust.

Also, a reminder that if your child is in Key Stage One, please cut their grapes in half lengthways to minimise the risk of choking. Thank you for your co-operation.





## WREN & ROBIN CLASS NEWS

Wow! What a wonderful start to the school year we have had!

Our new Wrens have had a fantastic beginning to their school journey, and the Robins have embraced being Year Ones with enthusiasm — they are proving to be brilliant role models!

Everyone has settled (or settled back) beautifully into the new school year. The children have made new friends, and it's been lovely to see our classroom buzzing with activity, curiosity, and purpose.

Our first enquiries have been 'Who are we?' (for the Wrens) and 'What are we?' (for the Robins). These themes have led us

to explore ourselves, our families, our homes, and how much we've grown and changed since we were babies. The Robins also learned some exciting new vocabulary — they now know that we are all mammals, and that most of us are omnivores, with a few herbivores (vegetarians) among us!

This week, we've been learning all about Harvest and the wonderful work of the Gillingham Foodbank. We've had lots of fun with the story of *Supertato* and all the mischievous vegetables! One morning, we arrived to find peas scattered all around our classroom — the children are quite certain that the Evil Pea has paid us a visit! Since then, there have been many creative traps and "KEEP OUT" signs appearing everywhere!

We are so incredibly proud of our new Wrens and our 'old' Robins and all they have achieved in their first term of the school year.

It's been a very busy and exciting start to the year — so enjoy a well-deserved rest next week before the craziness of Christmas is upon us!

*Mrs de Villiers, Mrs Turvey and Mrs Jones*



### KINGFISHER CLASS NEWS

Wow! What a busy first half term we have had! We feel really proud of our children for making the big transition to Key Stage Two and for settling quickly in to Kingfisher Class.

We started in our early days by creating our class charter based on our 3 school rules: 'Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe'. We thought about what this looked like in the classroom for us and finally agreed to follow all of these rules by drawing our portraits and signing our names.

We have all thoroughly enjoyed our first enquiry entitled 'Where does the darkness come from?'

We had great fun experimenting how light travels in straight lines and reflects off different surfaces. We learnt that light reflects best from smooth, shiny surfaces such as mirrors, or lighter materials. The black and darker materials we tested absorbed some of the light so didn't reflect it as well.

We then moved on to explore shadow puppets and how these worked. Using a light source (torch) and a simple puppet we made on a stick, we worked out how the shadow was created. A shadow was created when the puppet (the opaque object) was blocking the light from reaching the surface. A dark outline of the puppet, where the light couldn't get to, was then shown as the shadow.

As part of our English learning, we have been exploring the story of Rama and Sita. We began by ordering the story pictorially, before being introduced to play scripts. We had lots of fun taking on the roles of different characters and trying to follow the stage directions that were in our script.

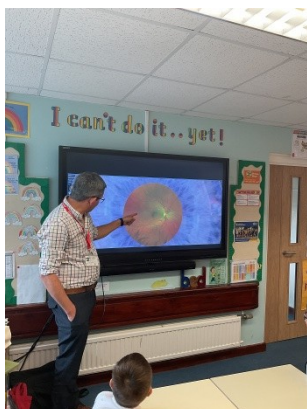
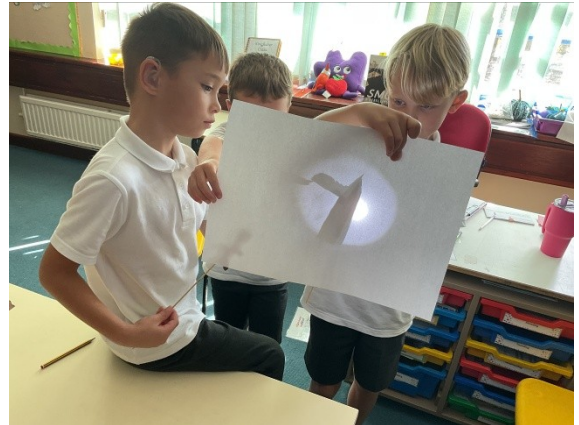
As our enquiry challenge was to make a puppet show of Rama and Sita, we worked in pairs to explore how the size of a shadow can change. We found out that when the light source is further away from the object, the shadow it creates is smaller, and vice versa. This really helped us when we rehearsed and performed our final shadow puppet performances. Everyone did a great job with this and we all agreed that being a puppeteer was trickier than we thought it would be.

As part of our enquiry, we were lucky enough to have had a fantastic visit from Mr Chapman, an optometrist. He taught us SO many interesting things about our eyes, how they are made up of different parts and layers, how light enables us to see, how to protect our eyes and also how he can help in his job role if people are having problems with their eyesight. He showed us some glasses (that we even got to try on!) and contact lenses before explaining all of the different parts of his job.

Along with all of this amazing enquiry learning, we have been busy in Maths focusing on place value of numbers to 1000, as well as learning to add and subtract crossing 1s, 10s and 100s.

It is fair to say that we have fitted a lot in to this half term and the children have remained resilient and enthusiastic throughout. We hope they all enjoy their very well deserved half term with their families, and we look forward to more fun learning to come next half term.

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





### OWL CLASS NEWS

What a Fantastic Start to the Year!

What a brilliant beginning Owl Class has had! Year 2 is such an exciting year, and it's been wonderful to see the children stepping into their roles as the oldest in Key Stage 1. Their thoughtful behaviour and enthusiasm for learning has really stood out.

In Maths, we've had a very busy and productive start. The children have shown a fantastic eagerness to learn, especially as we've focused on place value and number. They've been confidently using tens frames, place value charts, and number lines to support their understanding.

At the start of term, we explored the book 'The Best Part of Me', which inspired us to appreciate and celebrate our amazing bodies. From fast legs to beautiful eyes and clever hands, the children wrote thoughtful descriptions that we've now compiled into a class book—what a wonderful way to celebrate ourselves! We then moved on to exploring Traditional Tales, and one of our favourites was 'The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig'! We had so much fun reading this hilarious twist on a classic story. The role reversal of the characters was unexpected—and made us laugh a lot!

Our enquiry topic, 'What could my classroom be made of?', has sparked lots of curiosity about materials. The children have enjoyed sorting different materials and learning new scientific vocabulary like "transparent." They can now describe materials and explain some of their key properties with confidence.

Keep up the  
Owl Class!



fantastic  
Mrs



work,  
Hodge





## WOODPECKER CLASS NEWS

What a busy start to the year we've had in Woodpeckers! The children have settled well into the new routines of our mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class, and can be proud of their hard work so far this term.

Our first enquiry of the year has been 'What does Earth look like from the solar system?'. To begin we became Scientists, discovering the planets and other objects in our solar system; how the Earth, moon and other planets move around the sun; and why we have day and night on Earth. As part of this, we

made ourselves into human models of the solar system, recreating the planets' orbits around the sun to support our understanding of this tricky topic! We also conducted a day-long outdoor investigation using sundials and shadows on the field to track the movement of the sun across the sky, developing our Working Scientifically skills to take measurements, record our results and write conclusions.

As Geographers, we had fun developing our atlas and digital mapping skills while learning about lines of longitude and latitude and how Earth is split into twenty-four time zones. Finally, as Artists we have been practising and developing our skills in painting, learning how to create different textures with paint. We have been looking at amazing photographs of Earth's landscapes from above and recreating these images using our painting skills.

Our Final Challenge for this enquiry was to make a space documentary, using all our newly acquired Scientific knowledge! The children worked in groups to plan and create their documentaries, coming together as a team with each person taking on a special role, such as writer, presenter or filmer. The children had lots of fun producing their documentaries together and even used a green screen to create special effects! They all worked really hard on their documentaries and produced some terrific work!

As part of our Enquiry we were also lucky enough to take a trip to We the Curious in Bristol, where we had a super day exploring all the various activities in the museum, experiencing a spectacular show in the planetarium and training to become astronauts in our own class workshop! The children were brilliantly behaved throughout the trip, and showed a positive attitude and enthusiasm for all activities!

In our other learning, we have been working hard as Authors writing an advert for a Space Hotel, using all our knowledge of persuasive writing techniques. As Mathematicians, we've been developing our knowledge of Place Value and Addition and Subtraction. In PE, we have been Gymnasts, learning to perform balances and travelling movements both independently and with a partner, as well as enjoying getting out onto the field for Tag Rugby! We have also taken a run around the track for our well-deserved movement breaks each afternoon!

Well done Woodpeckers for a fantastic start to the year! Keep up the great work! *Miss Cheetham*







## FALCON CLASS NEWS

Falcons have had a fantastic first half term and have settled brilliantly into their new class and new routines. It has been lovely to see so many new friendships form between the mixed age groups and the new children who have joined us this year.

We have enjoyed our first Curious City enquiry, 'What does the Earth look like from the solar system?' where we have been Scientists, Geographers and Artists. It has given us lots of opportunities to take our learning outdoors whilst we investigate light and shadows. We have explored how we have day and night, how we know the Earth, the sun and the moon are spherical and looked at how shadows change over the day and what this tells us about the position of the Earth. We have also created some lovely art, looking at views of our planet from space and using pencil and paint to create lines, shading, colour and texture. For our end of enquiry challenge we have written and starred in space documentaries to share all we have learned.

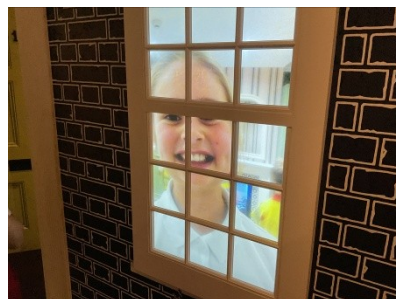
In English, we have written some brilliant persuasive texts encouraging people to come and visit our Space Hotel! We have had lots of fun with language and explored lots of different persuasive techniques, resulting in writing our own advertisements.

In Maths, we have been focusing on place value; Year 4 with tens of thousands and Year 5 with millions. We have also begun addition and subtraction. We have enjoyed our Problem Solving Fridays where Y5 get a chance to stretch their brains and Y4 consolidate that all important times tables knowledge.

The highlight of the half term was our visit to We the Curious in Bristol last week. Our patience with a very long journey was rewarded by a fantastically busy day with so many learning opportunities. We enjoyed visiting moons in the planetarium where our 3D glasses really brought things to life! We then took part in a workshop where we learnt what it would take to be an astronaut and took part in our own astronaut training. We loved exploring the exhibits in the museum, there were so many great hands-on opportunities for us. It was so much fun!

It has been a long and busy half term and Falcons have very much earned a restful break!

*Mrs Turner, Mrs Beales and Miss Bryan*





## HERON CLASS NEWS

Wow! What an incredibly busy start to Year 6 for Heron Class. We certainly got off to a fun start with our residential trip to Osmington Bay where we stayed 3 days at PGL. After a very wet first day, the weather brightened up and we had fun trying out lots of amazing activities which included abseiling, the big swing, street skating, fencing, archery, aero ball and the zip wire. Everyone was absolutely brilliant at challenging themselves and showing just how resilient and determined they are. We were so proud of their wonderful attitudes.



Back in class, we have been working hard in Maths, tackling long division, multiplication and lots of different arithmetic questions. We read a wonderful novel in English, written completely in prose, which the class absolutely loved and wrote some amazing poems of their own. Our Enquiry, "How are lives saved?" has seen us learning all about the circulatory system, the heart, the blood, having a visit from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and looking into the advancements in medicine over the years. Linking this with our English sessions, we wrote an explanation text to share our scientific knowledge and compiled a non-chronological report about how to live a healthy lifestyle. We completed our Enquiry by writing and presenting a TED talk about a topic that both interested us and was important to us.

We also had the most amazing visit to the Curiosity Cube at Gillingham school and learnt about how AI is helping in the advancements of medicine. It was a great opportunity to spend some time at the secondary school.

We are looking forward to a well deserved rest over half term, ready to return and continue with some more exciting learning. Well done Herons. You really have made a wonderful start to Year 6. Keep it up! *Mrs Rose*

