

February 2026

#003

Dear Parents and Carers,

Despite the rather persistent rainy weather, spirits around school have remained high. Our school value this term, Resilience, has truly stood us all in good stead and has been evident in the attitudes and enthusiasm shown by both pupils and staff.

We were delighted to learn that we are a Top 10 school in Dorset for overall performance in our KS2 results, and the highest-ranking school in Gillingham. While we are very proud of these achievements, we also recognise that there is far more to school life than academic results alone. This is why we continue to place great importance on our broader curriculum and on providing our children with those extra opportunities that enrich their learning and personal development.

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving sustainability, we were pleased to welcome Dorset's Recycling Officer, Kirsten, who spent time working with the school. She will be returning later in the year to share further practical ideas on reducing waste and improving recycling at home and at school. Kirsten will also be available in the playground to answer any questions you may have and, we hope, to hand out some free food recycling bags.

We also welcomed Gillingham Foodbank, who spoke to Kingfisher Class about their work and the importance of supporting others in our community. This was a valuable and thought-provoking experience for the children.

Owl Class enjoyed a wonderful trip to Haynes Motor Museum. Thank you to all the parents who accompanied us and supported the visit. A great deal of fun was had, with highlights including the chance to sit in a Formula 1 car, an American gas guzzler, and even an electric car of the future.

We were equally excited to welcome Longleat, who brought part of their zoo to school. Well done to Heron Class, the keepers commented as they left that this was the most engaged class they had ever worked with. Thank you for demonstrating our school values so clearly and for representing Wyke so brilliantly.

Congratulations also to Year 5 for their participation in the Dance Festival in Mere, and thank you to parents for helping with transport. The term finished on a high with our Shake It Up Day and the school disco. Once again, a huge thank you to our Friends of Wyke for their fundraising and continued support. Thanks to their efforts, we have been able to replace the rather ancient classroom chairs in Woodpecker and Falcon Classes. Our aim is to replace chairs across the whole school over the coming year, so every little bit of support really does help.

We have lots planned for next term. In the meantime, we wish you all a lovely half term and look forward to welcoming everyone back, hopefully with the rain behind us and brighter evenings ahead.

Kind regards,

Ed Birkett

Headteacher



Chair of Governors' Newsletter Update

It was a real pleasure to visit Wyke Primary School recently and spend time meeting pupils and staff across the school. One particular highlight of my visit was joining Mrs De Villiers and the Reception and Year One class after they had listened to the delightful story 'The Magic Porridge Pot'. I was very fortunate to be invited to share a bowl of porridge with them, which made the experience all the more memorable! The children were thoroughly engaged in their learning, and it was wonderful to see their enthusiasm and curiosity shining through.

As I walked around the school, I was struck by the calm, purposeful atmosphere in classrooms and the high quality of teaching and learning taking place. It is clear that staff work incredibly hard to create engaging and supportive environments where every child can thrive.

My fellow governors and I will continue to pop in at regular intervals to see the school in action. We are always happy to speak with parents and carers and are available for a chat by appointment if you would like to get in touch.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the fabulous Friends of Wyke School for all the amazing work they do to support our pupils. We are very grateful for their dedication and look forward to everything they have planned for the coming year.

Barry von Clemens

SAFFRON ABSEILS FROM ALFRED'S TOWER IN AID OF SOS AFRICA!



National
Trust

Wow! We are very proud of Saffron who is looking forward to taking part in an abseil from Alfred's Tower on 25th April in aid of the charity SOS Africa, and the National Trust.

To read Saffron's story, please click [HERE](#) and more information about the charity SOS Africa can be found [HERE](#).

Saffron and her family would be very grateful for any support for these great causes, please click [HERE](#) if you would like to make a donation. Thank you. 😊

Longleat Visit to Heron Class

Longleat Safari Park came to visit year 6 Heron class as part of our Enquiry - Linnaeus and Darwin, how are they connected? We were learning about how animals have evolved and adapted to their environments. Longleat brought four different species of animals; The first of the four animals was a Madagascan hissing cockroach which some of Heron class held and keepers explained the animal's lifestyle and how their hiss helps protect them from predators. The second animal was a Royal Python which again some of the class held and keepers explained about its habitat and diet. Next up, the third animals were the ferrets. The class were not allowed to hold the ferrets because of safety precautions but we were able to do ferret playtime where the class made a circle and the ferrets ran in the middle exploring their new surroundings. They have very flexible bodies to be able to squeeze into small places. The fourth and final creature was a tarantula which we were able to hold if we wanted. For a bonus, the keepers brought a prop lion skull and the keepers showed the class how lions hunt and bite using their incredible canines.

It was an amazing afternoon and an experience that we will remember for a long time.

A massive shout out to the Friends of Wyke for funding this awesome visit and experience. Thank you! By Heron Class



Wyke Reading Champions

2026 is the National Year of Reading! To celebrate this, we have appointed our first ever Wyke Reading Champions!

The older children had an assembly all about the National Year of Reading and were invited to volunteer to become Reading Champions. Children who were chosen are all fantastic ambassadors for reading, sharing books regularly and passing on recommendations. Children who are Word Millionaires will automatically become Reading Champions through the year, as well as anyone else who goes above and beyond in reading. We are looking forward to our first event: a special assembly for World Book Day.

YEAR 6 HOCKEY TOURNAMENT REPORT

On Wednesday 14th January, a selection of 10 year 6's from Wyke Primary went down to Gillingham top school to compete against several other schools in a hockey tournament. When we arrived, we did a quick warm up on the astro turf. When the other competitors came, the games began. As there were 3 matches on at a time, we had to sit out for the first game. Our first match was against Milton primary school. Unfortunately one of our players got injured and we lost that game but we carried on with resilience and ended up winning our next game against Mere A team. This meant that we went through to the next round in 2nd place. Before our 3rd game we had a well deserved snack and drink break, then we got back into action. One of our players went home so the opposite team were generous and one of the players joined our team. We tried our best but our opposing team won the match. Luckily, we brought victory from our fourth match but sadly didn't bring the cup back home. However, we all had lots of fun and tried our best. By Heron Class



WOODPECKER CLASS NEWS

We have had a fun and very busy term in Woodpecker Class!

Our enquiry question this term has been “Where is our twin?”, with a strong focus on developing our Geography skills. The children have worked hard as Geographers, building their map-reading skills and learning how to make geographical comparisons. We began by exploring the geography of Gillingham, where the children learned how to read OS map symbols using a key and legend, as well as understanding the difference between human and physical features and how these are represented on maps. We also explored how population is shown on maps before carefully creating our own maps and keys to represent population numbers across the United Kingdom. Next, we analysed weather and climate data for Gillingham. The children learned how to present this information by drawing their own bar graphs and line graphs, linking their learning across Geography, Mathematics and Science. Finally, we learned all about our twin town, Le Neubourg in Normandy, France. We explored a French OS map, identified different map symbols, and compared Le Neubourg with Gillingham using appropriate geographical language.



Following this, we became Engineers and developed our sewing skills. We began by recapping how to thread a needle and use a running stitch while making a bookmark. The children then created a small felt pouch, learning a new stitch called the overstitch. For our final challenge, the children were able to be creative by designing and making their own choice of textile piece using any of the stitches they had learned.

In English, we have been working hard on our writing skills. The children invented magical food items inspired by Madame Pamplemousse and Her Incredible Edibles, using descriptive language to create enticing jar labels. They then developed their instruction-writing skills by creating a recipe for their own magical food item. Finally, the children wrote a short narrative describing a milk carton that comes to life!

In PE, Year 4 have been developing their netball skills with the sports coach. Meanwhile, Year 5 took part in a series of dance workshops with a visiting dance teacher. Over five weeks, they worked hard to learn a dance routine, which they performed in front of the school, parents and carers, as well as at a dance festival at Mere School alongside several other schools. The children showed great resilience and determination throughout their lessons and performances, and we are all very proud of them.

All the children have shown great enthusiasm and curiosity throughout the term — we are extremely proud of their hard work! *Miss Cheetham*





OWL CLASS NEWS

We are coming to the end of another busy term in Owl Class, and all the children have been working extremely hard in their learning.

In our enquiry this term, "How will we get around in the future?", the children took on the roles of Scientists, Geographers and Engineers. They enjoyed exploring transport from the past and had the opportunity to design and make their own vehicles to travel by air or water. The children also planned and plotted a route across different countries. We topped this

off with a fantastic trip to Haynes Motor Museum, where we learned all about different modes of transport.

In Maths, we had a great start learning about different values of coins and notes, as well as solving equivalent amounts, making a pound and calculating change. We have begun to learn about Multiplication and Division. The children have been learning different methods such as grouping and sharing, as well as solving number sentences using the multiplication and division symbols. They have worked extremely hard, as this can sometimes be a tricky area of learning.

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

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

Mrs Hodge



HERON CLASS NEWS

It has been another busy half term in Heron Class and Year 6 have continued to work hard and demonstrate 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 an exciting visit from Longleat Safari Park who brought with them some amazing animals to help us learn more about adaptation and evolution. We were able to hold most of the animals but the ferrets were a little too wriggly so we made a "playpen" using our bodies so they could run around and have "ferret playtime!"

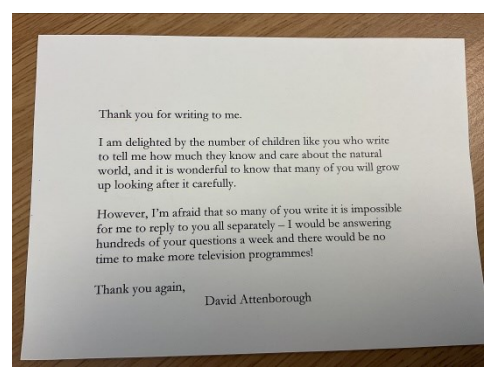
In English, we have written some lovely pieces this half term including a narrative description of The Galapagos Islands in the style of David Attenborough, together with a biography of Charles Darwin's life. Our narrations were so fantastic that we sent them to David Attenborough who wrote back telling us how impressed he was. We were so excited to receive a reply!

In Maths, we have continued to make great progress with arithmetic and have consolidated our knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages. We have also practiced using our mathematical vocabulary to explain our thinking on our "Problem solving Fridays!"

In PE, we have also been amazing athletes, improving our netball and sports acro skills in class together with competing in the Gillingham Schools hockey tournament with our Year 6 team playing amazingly well and being fantastic ambassadors for the school. A huge well done to all involved.

We have lots to look forward to next term including a trip to London to see the musical "Hercules", together with lots more exciting activities in school. Enjoy a restful half term Heron Class!

Mrs Rose





WREN AND ROBIN CLASS NEWS

What a brilliant term it has been in Wren and Robin Class! The children have been busy learning, exploring and having fun. We began the term with a hands-on enquiry, 'What is Winter?', which very helpfully coincided with a particularly chilly week. This led to lots of excitement as the children explored ice, freezing temperatures and cold weather. Using Google Earth, they also 'travelled' the globe to enjoy finding out about places that are always cold, sparking lots of talk and questions.

As the term progressed, the Wrens and Robins took part in different enquiries simultaneously.

The Wrens immersed themselves in the enquiry 'What stories do we know?', and it has been an absolute delight. The children explored a wide range of traditional tales, including The Billy Goats Gruff, Hansel

and Gretel, The Magic Porridge Pot, Jack and the Beanstalk and many more. Along the way, they discovered that stories don't just live in books. Stories can be spoken, imagined, acted out and even sung! The Wrens retold stories on our classroom blanket stage, performed them outdoors during Outdoor Learning, used puppets, small-world toys and their own imaginations, and thoroughly enjoyed every moment. They also discovered that not all books contain stories and loved exploring non-fiction books, learning fascinating facts about the world around them.

Meanwhile, the Robins were busy with their enquiry 'How can we play in different ways?'. They began by learning what History is and what historians do — and then became historians themselves. The Robins investigated how children played in the past by asking parents and grandparents about the games and toys they remembered. We were thrilled to receive letters, photographs and detailed explanations from families, which brought history to life. The children compared old toys with modern ones and had great fun playing with traditional toys, all while developing a real understanding of the past.

In the final week of term, both classes came together to learn about Chinese/Lunar New Year, a vibrant and joyful celebration. The children particularly loved creating and performing their own dragon dances!

What a fantastic term it's been — and how are we already halfway through the school year? We wish all our families a very happy half term and hope that the second half of the Spring Term brings slightly drier weather and many more exciting learning adventures!

Mrs de Villiers, Mrs Turvey, Mrs Jones and Grace



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FALCON CLASS NEWS

This half term has just flown by with lots of busy learning! Our enquiry has been 'Where Is Our Twin?' where we have been Geographers, finding out all about our twin town of Le Neubourg in France. We have looked at human and physical features as well as comparing statistics such as population density and all about the climate. Our Maths has been tested by studying the average rainfall and temperature of each place and drawing line graphs and bar graphs. We have also been Engineers, learning sewing skills. This has really tested our resilience and been a good lesson that we can't always get things right first time! We learned several stitches including running stitch and over stitch and we also practised the important life skill of sewing on a button.



In English, we have been having lots of opportunities to develop our Author skills. We have written fabulous Winter haiku and also used the book 'Madame Pamplemousse's Incredible Edibles'. We wrote descriptively, using our grammatical skills to design an inventive new food product and we also used our non-fiction skills to write recipes.

We have been crazy for the new graphic novels in Falcons and take every opportunity to be able to read them. Some of us have even started our own mini-projects, becoming authors to create our own comic style books.

We were very proud of our Year 5s for taking part in the annual Mere Dance Festival. There were a few nerves before hand but everyone overcame them and did their very best.

A fantastic half term everyone, enjoy your break and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Mrs Turner, Mrs Beales and Miss Bryan





KINGFISHER CLASS NEWS

We started a new enquiry this half term entitled 'What is the difference between surviving and being healthy?' In this enquiry we have primarily been artists, but have also been scientists and engineers. We have learnt SO much, starting with focusing on what we need to live a healthy life and how we can make sensible choices about our diet and nutrition we give our bodies what they need. We looked closely at the eat well plate and how this is split up proportionally so that our body gets all the goodness and benefits that each group offers... such as carbohydrates giving our bodies energy and vitamins and minerals from fruits and vegetables helping our immune system to stay strong.

We had lots of fun finding out about our skeletons and how they offer support and protection to our vital organs, as well as our muscles allowing our bodies movement and flexibility. Much of this enquiry has involved learning about different artists such as Andy Warhol who was well known for his 'pop art' movement, and Itsuo Kobayashi who painted and documented all of his meals he made as a chef. The best fun has been recreating our own pieces in the styles of these artists, and experimenting with colour mixing and making secondary and tertiary colours. We are looking forward to sharing their masterpieces with you in their showcase on Monday 23rd February at 2.45pm.

As authors this half term, we learnt about non-chronological reports. After a very informative visit from Helen, who manages the Gillingham Foodbank, we collected and organised research before writing our own reports about the services the Foodbank offer to those in need. We have also enjoyed using the film clip 'The 'Wishgranter' and have written our own stories based on the wishes we would ask to be granted.

As mathematicians, we have been learning about measuring using metres, centimetres and millimetres. We are becoming experts in measuring in cm and mm with a ruler and converting between these measures.

Wow! What a busy half term we have had. The children have really progressed with their learning in all areas of the curriculum and we feel so proud of them. Enjoy a well-deserved half term break and we look forward to welcoming you back for the second part of the spring term.

Mrs Abbott, Mrs Simpson, Mrs Marchlewicz and Miss Pollard

