

Dear Families,

As always at this time of year, I find it hard to believe that we are already halfway through the school year! Time really does fly when you're having fun! This week, the children took part in *Safer Internet Day*, a timely reminder of the importance of online safety. While the day itself shines a spotlight on key messages, in school, every day is a *Safer Internet Day!* We consistently reinforce key messages about staying safe online, making responsible choices, and understanding the impact of our digital footprints.

A key theme of this year's parental awareness campaign is that parenting online should be no different from parenting in the real world. Would you encourage your child to talk to a stranger on the street? If the answer is *no*, then why let them go online unsupervised? There are no set rules for when to give your child access to technology – every child is different and will mature at their own pace. However, when deciding when and how to grant greater independence, it's important to consider:

- ✓ The age at which your child is given their own device.
- ✓ The access your child has to online platforms and services.

Please remember that social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat are not appropriate for primary-aged children. Most have an age restriction of 13 due to content that may not be suitable for younger users.

For guidance on age-appropriate technology access, visit the NSPCC's online safety page: [NSPCC – Keeping Children Safe Online](#).

Let's keep working together to keep our children safe both online and offline!

Have a lovely half-term,
Sinead Connolly, Headteacher

Nursery Admissions are now open.

If you have a child born 01/09/2021-31/08/2022 then this will be the time to apply. Please ring the office for more information on 01279 771285.

Diary Dates

- 14/02/25 Half-Term Begins @3:15
- 24/02/25 Back to School
- 28/02/25 Lime Class Foodbank Friday
- 06/03/25 World Book day-see attachment
- 07/03/25 Beech Class Foodbank Friday
- 7th-16th/03/25 Science Week
- 26/03/25 Book Fair Arrives
- 14/03/25 Foodbank Friday
- 01/04/25 Class Photos
- 02/04/25 Parent consultations 1-7
- 04/04/25 End Of term 1pm

An update from Ms Sassis our maths lead.

This week, we held a *Book Look* in Maths, focusing on *Representations* and *Revisiting Opportunities*. It was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the children's learning and gain insights into how they develop their mathematical understanding.

Representations refer to the different ways children visualise and work through mathematical concepts. These include concrete manipulatives like counters, number lines, bar models, and diagrams. Using these tools, children move between concrete, pictorial, and abstract thinking, deepening their understanding of number relationships and problem-solving. We saw brilliant examples in the children's work, including part-whole models, number lines, bar models, and pictorial strategies.

We also explored *Revisiting Opportunities*, which are designed to help children consolidate prior learning. Pupils shared a range of ways they revisit key concepts, including *WWN*, *maths.co.uk*, *5-a-day* or *3 Reasoning* activities, *TTRockstars*, and arithmetic practice pages. These regular opportunities reinforce learning, build fluency, and boost confidence.

It was wonderful to hear the children articulate their thinking and explain how these approaches support their learning. Their voices and reflections continue to shape how we develop our teaching and curriculum.

Thank you for your ongoing support in nurturing a love of Maths at our school!

Empathy Assembly: *On Sudden Hill* and the Magic of an Empty Box

In this fortnight's empathy assembly, we explored the beautifully moving book *On Sudden Hill* by Linda Sarah and Benji Davies. The story follows two best friends, Birt and Etho, who spend their days playing with cardboard boxes on Sudden Hill—until change arrives in the form of a new friend. We reflected on the power of friendships, the challenges of change, and how welcoming new people can make our world even richer.

The children had deep and insightful thoughts on the story:

- 👂 "It can be hard when things change, but sometimes it makes life more exciting."
- 👂 "You don't have to stop being friends with someone just because you make a new one."
- 👂 "If you let someone in, they might bring new ideas and fun."

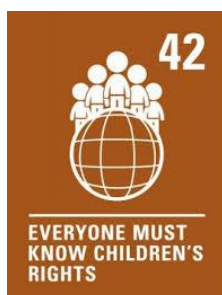


On another note, we also considered one of childhood's simplest joys—an empty cardboard box! How much fun and adventure can one bring? I shared with the children that my own son was about 15 (though I bet he would be still tempted) before he finally stopped climbing into boxes, which led to plenty of knowing smiles from our older pupils!

To celebrate the creative magic of a big box, we held a '**Great Big Box**' competition, and it was fantastic to see so many imaginative entries from Year 5 and 6. From colosseums to race cars to a house for their cat, their creativity knew no bounds! Well done to Michael, Harrison and Jess- we hope you have great fun and that your parents are just as thrilled as you are!

It was a wonderful reminder that sometimes, the simplest things bring the most joy—and that change, like an empty box, is full of possibilities.

Rights Respecting Schools

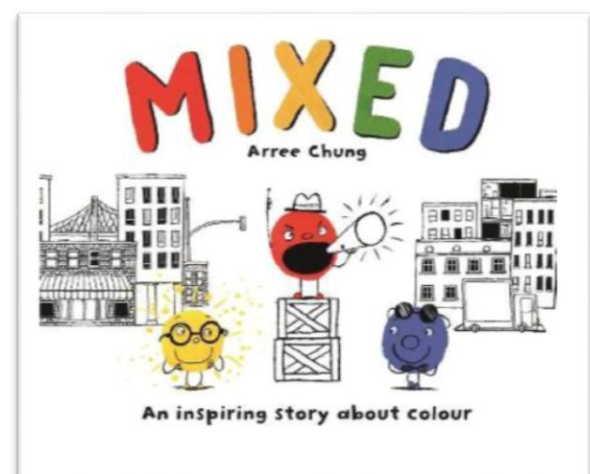


Article 2 *The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities, or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.*

Article 42 *states that all children should know about their rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

During our Rights Respecting Schools assembly, we listened to the beautiful story 'Mixed' by Arree Chung. 'Mixed' is a charming and thought-provoking picture book with characterful illustrations and humour. The story follows the colours as they overcome their differences in this tale of acceptance and celebrating difference.

The Blues, Reds and Yellows lived in harmony. Reds were the loudest, Yellows the brightest and Blues were the coolest. However, when one of the colours proclaims they are the best, discord breaks out and eventually the colours decide to live in different parts of the city. Then one day a Yellow befriends a Blue and they become inseparable, discovering a world of different possibilities and colours.



This vibrant tale celebrates the diversity of different colours and cultures while emphasising the importance of unity. The children were captivated by the vibrant illustrations and relatable characters, which sparked thoughtful discussions amongst them about our differences and similarities.

The message of 'Mixed' links beautifully with our previous assembly centred around Martin Luther King Jr. and his dream that people of all colours live harmoniously. This aligns with Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that every child has the right to be protected from discrimination of any kind, regardless of their race, colour, or background. Just as Martin Luther King advocated for equality and respect, 'Mixed' encourages us to appreciate the beauty in our diversity and stand against discrimination.

As we continue our journey towards being a Rights Respecting School, it is essential that we work together to foster an environment where every child feels valued and included. Encouraging our young learners to respect one another's rights lays the foundation for a compassionate and accepting community. Ask your child how we can celebrate our differences in school and beyond. Your support in reinforcing these messages is invaluable.

Mrs Tweedale,

Deputy Head

Rights Respecting Schools Co-ordinator



News from the classes...

This week, in Early Years, the children have been enjoying 'slowing down', after sharing the story Tisha and the Blossom by Wendy Meddour. Through breath work and yoga games, the children enjoyed taking the time to create dances with scarves and artwork with bubbles! With increased mindfulness, we were able to notice details that may have passed us by before... the different sizes of bubbles... the way the bubbles rose up with every blow. The children loved noticing these little details during their explorations.



Our yoga activities in particular have highlighted our improved listening skills within sessions, so much so that Mrs Lawrence could even hand over the role of teacher to some of the children!

In literacy, the children enjoyed using the Tales Toolkit format to retell this term's focus story, The Magic Paintbrush by Julia Donaldson. The children in Ash class were able to form simple words and sentences to retell the story, and Saplings drew pictures with meaning and some initial sounds. Our maths learning had us

building towers, and identifying which were shorter, and which were taller. We noticed that the taller towers used up more bricks than the shorter ones.

The children have also been helping the teachers clear up our outdoor area, ready for the new half term! With improvements underway, the children have been using their motor skills to help clear the walls in readiness for a cosy new reading nook and small world area. The children loved this activity so much that they have requested that we do more wall mark making and brushing!



In Beech class, our focus in English has been on writing instructions. The Year 1 children have been learning about the key features of instructional writing, including using bossy (imperative) verbs and writing in a clear, step-by-step format. They put their learning into practice by writing instructions for making a delicious fruit salad, ensuring they included numbered steps and time connectives such as 'first', 'next', and 'finally'.

Meanwhile, the Year 2 children took on a rather unusual and fun challenge—they wrote instructions for making a head out of chocolate! They focused on using precise and detailed language, ensuring that their instructions were easy to follow. In addition to this, Year 2 children have been refining their editing skills. They have been learning how to check their work carefully, making improvements to their spelling, punctuation, and grammar, as well as ensuring their writing is clear and makes sense.

In Maths, the Year 1 children have been learning all about money. They have been identifying different coins and notes, understanding their values, and practising how to make different amounts. They have also started solving simple addition and subtraction problems using money, helping them to develop their practical problem-solving skills. The Year 2 children have been deepening their understanding of division, focusing on how it is the inverse (opposite) of multiplication. They have been using their knowledge of times tables to solve division problems and have been learning how to check their answers by using multiplication facts.

Our Year 1 children had an exciting hands-on experience in DT this week as they made their very own fruit salad! They followed the instructions they had written earlier in the week, carefully selecting and preparing their ingredients. It was fantastic to see their enthusiasm and independence as they chopped, mixed, and created their healthy and tasty dishes.



In Art the Year 2 children have been busy evaluating their final pieces in their pointillism art project. They took time to reflect on their work, discussing what they felt went well and what they might improve if they were to do it again. Their ability to assess their own work and think critically about the artistic process was very impressive, and they should all be very proud of their efforts.

In our yoga sessions, the children have been exploring different animal poses and learning how to sequence them together. They worked in small groups to create their own yoga routines, thinking carefully about how to transition smoothly between poses. It was wonderful to see them sharing their sequences with one another and enjoying the calming and strengthening benefits of yoga.



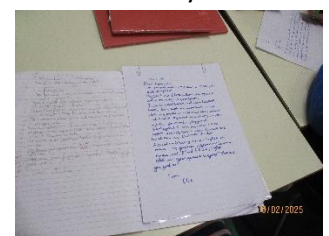
What an exciting and busy week we've had in Lime Class! We have been wrapping up our geography topic: "What do you know about Italy?" and have discovered so many fascinating facts about this amazing country.

To showcase our knowledge, we created detailed fact files about the ancient city of Pompeii. We learned how the powerful eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79 buried the city under volcanic ash, preserving buildings, streets, and even people in time. It was incredible to see how archaeologists have uncovered the ruins, helping us understand what life was like in Ancient Rome.



We also put our creativity to the test by designing bright and eye-catching travel posters to encourage people to visit Italy. We included all the things that make the country special—delicious food like pizza and pasta, traditional music, the importance of family life, and Italy's famous fashion industry. Now we know why so many people dream of visiting Italy!

On Tuesday, we took part in Safer Internet Day and had some really important discussions about staying safe online. We focused on **scammers** who try to trick people with offers that seem "too good to be true." We learned a golden rule—STOP, THINK, and QUESTION! If something online doesn't feel right, we should always check with a trusted adult before clicking on anything suspicious.



In English, we completed our second letter to our Greek pen pals, sharing exciting details about our daily lives, favourite subjects, and everything we've been learning in school. We're eagerly waiting for their replies and can't wait to hear what life is like in Greece!

We've also been completely hooked on our class book *Mouse, Bird, Snake, Wolf* by David Almond. The story is full of mystery and imagination, and we love discussing our predictions about what might happen next. It's getting more exciting by the day!

Maths has been all about adding and subtracting fractions. We discovered that when the denominators (the bottom numbers) are the same, they stay the same, and we just add or subtract the numerators (the top numbers). We have been working really hard to become fraction experts!

In Art, we had so much fun experimenting with colour mixing to create dramatic seascapes. We explored different shades of blue, green, and purple to show the movement of waves and the changing mood of the sea. The results were amazing, and our classroom is now full of fantastic ocean-inspired artwork!

As we reach the end of our Science and RE topics, we've been testing our knowledge with quizzes and summaries, reflecting on all the fascinating things we've learned this term. It has been a great way to refresh our memory and feel proud of everything we've achieved!



In Maple class, on Tuesday, we celebrated Safer Internet Day with an exciting and informative online safety lesson. We joined Joel Mawhinney and Maddie Moate in Scam Smashers, a virtual adventure where we stepped into the world of digital tricksters! In this engaging live lesson, we had to outsmart scammers by using teamwork and detective skills to protect our personal information.

Together, we successfully completed the challenge and defeated the scammers!



Afterwards, we created informative posters highlighting online dangers, the importance of keeping personal information private and practical tips for staying safe online. Through this activity, we also learned how people may behave differently online, sometimes pretending to be someone they are not. We also learnt how to use technology responsibly and to report concerns to trusted adults about unsafe or suspicious behaviour.



Building on this theme in English, the children channelled their creativity by writing rap poems about online safety. Working in small groups, they crafted catchy rhyming verses, experimenting with different line lengths to create flow and energy. Using their knowledge of e-safety, they incorporated key messages about keeping personal information private, recognising scams and navigating the online world responsibly. The rap poems were both educational and fun, packed with rhythm, creativity and important reminders about staying safe online. Children performed them with clarity and expression.



In PSHE, we shifted our focus to the health risks associated with vaping and smoking, linking our discussions to our Rights Respecting School ethos. We shared how cigarettes affect the body and considered why fewer people smoke today. While

the health risks of smoking are well known, we explored how the potential dangers of vaping are not yet fully understood. This led to a reflection on our right to the best possible health (Article 24, UNCRC) and the importance of making informed decisions to protect our well-being.





Maple class also had a lesson on drugs, further reinforcing their right to good health. The children learned that medicines are a type of drug, explored important safety considerations for medicine use and discussed alternatives to taking medicine when feeling unwell. Through these discussions, they recognised their responsibility to make safe and informed choices for their health and the well-being of others.



This week in gymnastics, using apparatus, the children performed various body shapes and balances. Using the ropes, they excitedly climbed with determination, persevering to build their upper body strength, demonstrating control and coordination throughout their movements.

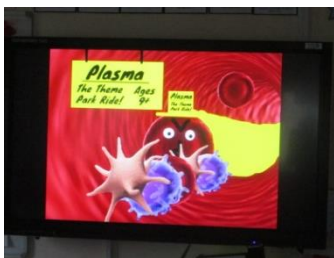
This week in Willow Class has been filled with learning, creativity, and collaboration.

Following an informative science lesson about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and the benefits of regular exercise, two of our enterprising students, Nancy and Belle, took it upon themselves to prepare a proposal for a new fitness club at our school. Their presentation to Ms. Connolly was met with much enthusiasm, as they eloquently shared the benefits of the club alongside practical considerations for its establishment. It is truly inspiring to witness such proactive behaviour, demonstrating how our classroom learning can translate into real initiatives.

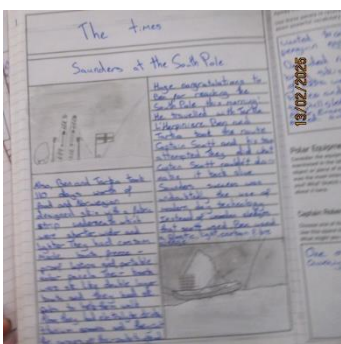


Staying within the science theme, Leo has really shone this week by creating a short film using 'Scratch' software and an editing app called YouCut. His film, which explores the fascinating topic of the various components of blood, is both entertaining and informative. We invite you to enjoy Leo's insightful creation by clicking this link. [Blood](#)

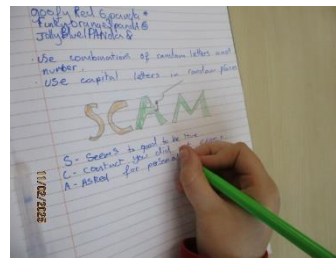
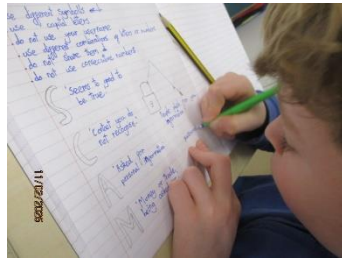
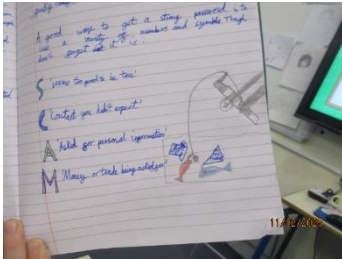
How wonderful it is that our engagement with learning has motivated us to undertake such positive action!



In our history lesson, we took a closer look at the differences between Captain Scott's Terra Nova expedition and modern-day exploration. We were astounded to learn how contemporary adventurers, like Ben Saunders, manage to tackle the same treacherous routes that Scott and his team undertook, albeit with significant advancements in technology. We examined the essential role of tools such as GPS and lightweight skiing equipment in enhancing safety and efficiency during expeditions. During the lesson, we wrote articles detailing our observations on the disparities between Scott's and Saunders' journeys. We learned some astonishing facts, such as Saunders' ingenious strategy of cutting labels from his clothing and snipping corners off his freeze-dried food packets to reduce weight, thus making his trek easier!



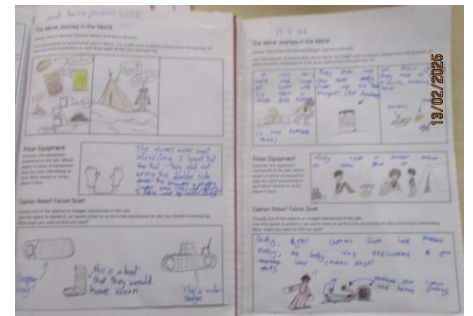
On Tuesday, we marked Safer Internet Day, focusing on the theme "Too good to be true? Keeping your personal information safe." During our discussions, we explored how to spot potential scams and gained an understanding of the concept of 'phishing.' We investigated what constitutes a strong password and then had fun generating their own passwords, ensuring we used a mixture of capital letters, lowercase letters, and symbols.



In Art, we have been developing our drawing techniques, focusing on blending and mixing colours using chalks. Inspired by the breathtaking beauty of the Northern Lights, we have created stunning pictures that reflect the vibrant hues and dynamic forms of this natural phenomenon.



We concluded the week with a superb online workshop with the Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge. This enlightening session allowed us to grasp the critical nature of studying Polar Regions, gaining insights into the explorations conducted by Scott and his peers. The emphasis on their remarkable discoveries regarding Emperor Penguins was a highlight for many of us.



Willow Class wish you all a very happy half term break.

Green Team Build Bird Boxes with Mr Hutt



Our Green Team had a fantastic afternoon working alongside our Chair of Governors, Mr Hutt, to build bird boxes for our school grounds. With hammers in hand and screwdrivers at the ready, the children threw themselves into the task with enthusiasm. The sound of nails being hammered echoed around, but they were far too focused to mind the noise!

It was wonderful to see their determination and teamwork as they carefully put together each box, knowing that they were creating safe spaces for birds to nest in our school's outdoor areas. Mr Hutt shared his expertise and guided them through the process, making sure everyone had the chance to get involved.

These bird boxes will soon be placed around the school, and we can't wait to see who moves in first! A huge thank you to Mr Hutt for his time, encouragement, and DIY skills.



Also, a friendly reminder that next Saturday, the 22nd of February, we'll be hosting the Farmer's Market. The Farmer's Market is raising money that is helping to pay for lots of equipment outdoors so please be sure to stop by and enjoy some delicious treats!

Exciting News – A New Abode for Our Musicians- Coming soon! 🎵🏠

Exciting news! We are soon to welcome a brand-new **outdoor office-style abode**, which will become a dedicated music room for our **blooming pianists** and other instrumentalists. Nestled just outside **Maple Class**, this beautiful space will finally give our young musicians a peaceful place to learn—because, as much as we adore hearing their scales and melodies drifting through the corridors, having lessons in the hallway (with people walking through discussing lost jumpers and missing lunch boxes) is far from ideal!

But music isn't the only thing that will flourish in our new creative space. Our **amazing art therapist** will also use the room to work with children in a quiet, calming environment—bringing even more creativity and well-being into our school.

This idea was sparked by **the governors and myself**, and we are **beyond excited** to see it come to life! However, before we can start filling the air with music, we may need **some strong and willing volunteers** to help put it together. If you fancy a bit of DIY, enjoy a good project, or just want to be part of something special for our children, please let us know. As always, we're grateful for this amazing community and know you'll be keen to lend a hand!

If you're interested in helping, please email the office. Huge thanks in advance—we couldn't do it without you!

We can't wait to see our new space in action and what the children will come up with for a name. Stay tuned!

