

Dear Families,

It has been a real pleasure to welcome the children back for the first week after the Easter holidays, and, as always, it already feels like we were never away- she says! The children have returned happily to their learning and routines, full of enthusiasm for the new topics and activities planned for the term ahead.

Year 4 have certainly made a memorable start, brewing some rather unusual concoctions in their science lesson today (I do hope those made it safely home rather than being left for us to discover!). Have just been to visit Maple Class and they are engaging in thoughtful and mature discussions in RE, showing great depth in their thinking.

Meanwhile, Lime Class have been filling the corridors with the wonderful sound of music as they rehearse for their performance next week—we are all very much looking forward to seeing the finished production. With a busy calendar of upcoming sports competitions and events, it is shaping up to be another exciting and enriching term. And while it may seem like we are always on the move, I can assure you that high-quality teaching and learning remain at the heart of everything we do—we would never let the academics slide!

Have a lovely weekend, and please let the sun shine!

Sinead Connolly, Headteacher

Diary Dates

- 13/04/26 Summer Term begins
- 21/04/26 Class Photographs
- 22/04/26 PTA Recycling Collection
- 22/04/26 Lime Class performance @6pm
- 29/04/26 The Lion King Trip
- 04/05/26 Bank Holiday
- 08/05/26 KS1 and 2 David Attenborough Live Streaming talk-100th birthday
- 11/05/26 SATS Willow Class
- 18/05-22/05 Willow Class Bikeability
- 19/05/26 Maple Class Performance @6pm
- 02/06/26 Learning Together Morning Lime Year 3
- 04/06/26 Learning Together Morning Willow
- 05/06/26 Learning Together Morning Lime Year 4
- 12/06/26 Learning Together Morning Maple Class
- 17-19/06/26 Gilwell Trip Willow
- 24/06/26 EYFS School Trip

Staff Farewell

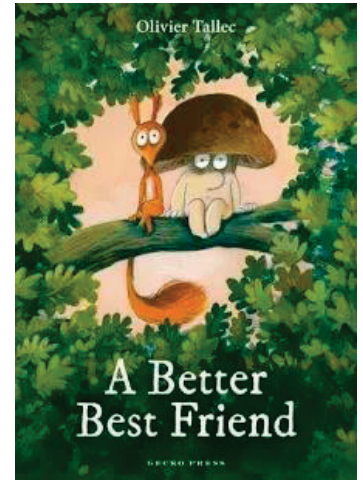
We would like to let you know that, at the end of this week, we will be saying a fond farewell to a much-valued member of our staff, Mrs Lewis, who is leaving us on Friday to spend more time with her family. She has been a dedicated and caring presence in our school community, and will be greatly missed by both pupils and colleagues alike. While we are naturally sad to see her go, we fully support her decision and wish her every happiness in this next chapter. I am pleased to share that we have successfully appointed a replacement; however, they will not be able to join us until after half term. In the meantime, we will ensure continuity and support for the children during this transition period.

Empathy Assembly – Being a Better Friend

At the start of this new term, we gathered together for our first empathy assembly, led by Mrs Neal, with a focus on how we can all look out for one another and be the very best friends we can be.

Mrs Neal shared the thoughtful and engaging book *A Better Best Friend*, which explores the ups and downs of friendship. Through the story, the children considered what it really means to be a good friend, especially during moments of jealousy, misunderstanding or when friendships feel challenging. The book gently reminds us that friendships are not always perfect, but with kindness, honesty and empathy, they can grow stronger.

As part of the assembly, the children were encouraged to reflect and ask questions. They thought deeply about how their actions can affect others and how small gestures can make a big difference in someone's day.



Some of their responses were particularly powerful:

- *“A good friend notices when someone is left out and invites them to join in.”*
- *“Even if you feel upset, you can still choose to be kind.”*
- *“If someone makes a mistake, you don’t have to stop being their friend—you can help them do better.”*
- *“Looking out for each other means you don’t ignore someone who is sad.”*

It was wonderful to hear such mature reflections from across the school, as we all know friendships need work and care. This discussion set a positive tone for the term ahead, reminding us all that we each have a role to play in creating this caring and supportive community.

As we move forward this term, we will continue to encourage the children to show empathy, to include others, and to look out for one another, both in the classroom and on the playground. Small acts of kindness, a listening ear, or simply noticing how someone else feels can make all the difference.

Representations, Reasoning and Revisiting Opportunities

I met with pupils from Years 1–6 to discuss Mathematics, with a focus on representations and opportunities for revisiting prior learning. During the book look and pupil voice discussion, children explained how they use a range of resources, images and models to support their understanding of mathematical concepts. They described using manipulatives such as counters, base ten blocks, dice and shapes and identified examples of representations in their work, including part-whole models, number lines, bar models, place value grids, diagrams and graphs.



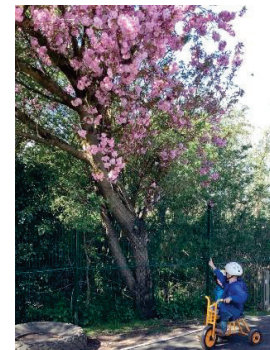
The discussion also explored how learning is retained and built upon over time. Pupils shared a variety of ways in which they engage in revisiting opportunities, including online platforms such as WWN, Maths.co.uk and TTRockstars, as well as early morning work such as ‘5-a-day’ activities, reasoning challenges and arithmetic practice pages.

Children also reflected on how their mathematical learning supports them in real-life contexts. They gave examples such as playing games, using money and giving change, understanding percentages when shopping and applying times table knowledge to calculate the area.

Finally, pupils discussed the value of working with learning partners during reasoning tasks. They explained how collaboration helps them to use mathematical language to justify and develop their thinking, share strategies and check their understanding.

Mrs Sassis

It has been a sunny start to our new term and Early Years have been making the most of the glorious weather outside! A particular 'hot topic' of the moment is our beautiful blossom tree which the children have been including in their play, from driving through 'blossom tunnels' to spotting blossom as it gently falls. The children are keen to see it continue to bloom over the coming days, and are eager to bring some of the fallen blossom home to show you (there has even been discussion about how to make sure the blossoms stay clean as they fall to the ground; a future experiment, we think!)



The children have also enjoyed our new story, Handa's Surprise, by Eileen Browne. We looked at a map of Kenya and listened to traditional music to help us get a feel for the setting in which our story took place. The children loved noticing the cheeky animals in the book taking Handa's fruit without being seen! Oil pastels were used to draw the animals, and thought was put into the colours used and the shape of each feature.

Our theme of animals continued in gymnastics as we delved deep into the rainforest and experimented with moving as different animals. From moving like a scorpion to wriggling like caterpillars, the children took great care to negotiate the space they had to move.



We enjoyed a lovely afternoon on Wednesday, learning an affirmation song to help give us confidence when we are finding things tricky. We sang the song to Gerald, the giraffe from the story Giraffes Can't Dance, to help him build resilience and face his fears. It was lovely to hear the children come up with their own positive affirmations to use in their own lives.

During PE the children had a chance to try out some new athletic skills. They practised their long jumping skills and were brilliant at waving their arms to build up momentum. They were all jumping long distances like kangaroos! Inspired by animals again the children also decided they could run as fast as cheetahs as they practised running along the field.

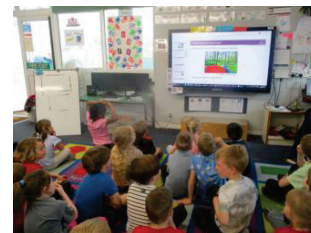


Forest school was a hubbub of activity this week. The children were excited to see the bluebells and snowdrops that had grown over the Easter holidays. All the children were busy exploring in the forest; some children were swinging in the hammock, others hunting for stinging nettles and building fences around them with logs to protect others. There was also a milkshake and smoothie café that opened up! It's wonderful to see the children being so imaginative in their play.

During Friday afternoon we had an excellent time investigating and tasting the fruits from Handa's surprise. The children described how the fruits felt on the outside and they all guessed what they thought they would look like on the inside. The children enjoyed tasting the fruits and some children even discovered some new fruits they enjoyed eating!



We've had a fantastic first week back in **Beech Class**, even though our lovely Mrs Goslitski has been off ill. Luckily, we have had brilliant teachers, whom we know well, step in and keep the show on the road. And why wouldn't it, when the children have returned so enthusiastically, ready to learn?



In English, Year 1 have been exploring The Dragon Slayer through a short film clip. They have been working hard to develop their writing using expanded noun phrases and prepositions, and will be using their senses to describe a cave setting in more detail. Year 2 have been focusing on non-fiction writing and have been creating their own postcards, thinking carefully about structure, facts and presentation.



In Maths, Year 1 have been learning about position and direction, using practical activities to help them understand movement and turns. Year 2 have been working on mass, capacity and temperature, developing their measuring skills and applying these in different contexts.

In RE, the children have been learning about the story of David and Goliath, discussing its meaning and what it teaches us about courage and resilience.

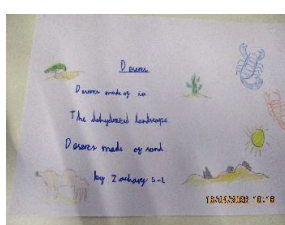
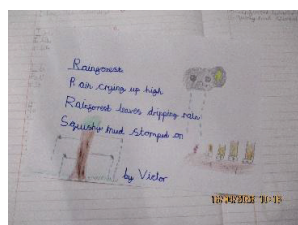


In Geography, we have started our new topic on biomes, with a focus on tundras. The children have been learning about the climate, animals and features of this extreme environment.

Our continuous provision has linked closely to our Science learning. The children have been enjoying planting seeds and will be observing how they grow under different conditions, such as light and dark, and with and without water. They have also loved using the water area to design and build their own irrigation systems, showing great creativity and problem-solving skills.



It has been a busy and rewarding time this week in **Lime Class** and we have hit the ground running, with the children showing great enthusiasm and creativity across the curriculum. In writing, Year 3 have produced some wonderful haiku poetry. They have immersed themselves in reading and exploring different poems, carefully brainstorming language, experimenting with syllables, and thoughtfully redrafting their work before publishing their final pieces. We are incredibly proud of their efforts, and their finished poems will soon be displayed on the classroom walls— please do come in and take a look.



Year 4 have been developing their persuasive writing skills, focusing on using emotive and impactful language to engage their readers. They have worked hard on refining their ideas, learning how to redraft and improve their writing to make it even more effective.

They have some of their beautiful written work about diary entries showcased in a fantastic display in the library, which highlights both their progress and their confidence as writers.



In mathematics, both year groups have continued to build their understanding of fractions. Year 4 have taken this learning further by exploring tenths and decimals, making connections between these concepts and deepening their overall number sense. It has been great to see the children applying their knowledge with increasing confidence.

Alongside this, we have been busy preparing for our upcoming class performance, which will take place next Wednesday. The children have approached this with great energy and excitement, contributing ideas and working collaboratively to bring everything together. Their growing knowledge of Tudor times really shines through, particularly their understanding of Henry VIII and the dramatic stories of his six wives. We are sure you will be impressed by their enthusiasm, confidence, and learning—get ready to be amazed!



This week in Maple class, we began reading our new class book, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo. The children are already enthusiastic about the story and are excited to see how Edward's journey unfolds. They were also introduced to the Maple class play on Ancient Egypt and are already looking forward to bringing it to life in the coming weeks.

In History, we started our new topic on the Maya civilisation. The pupils "met the Maya" and explored where and when the remains of the ancient civilisation were discovered. They then wrote diary entries in role as Spanish conquistadors, imagining their experiences and reactions as they encountered the Maya for the first time.



In English, the Year 5 children identified the key features of non-chronological reports. They practised using brackets to show parenthesis and colons to add extra detail. Working with their learning partners, they researched information about the Maya civilisation, made notes, and used these to write their own non-chronological reports. The Year 4 children focused on writing persuasive paragraphs for a letter encouraging others to use less plastic. They explored emotive language to strengthen their arguments and persuade the reader to make more environmentally friendly choices.



In Maths, the children learnt about recognising tenths and hundredths and worked with decimal numbers up to two decimal places.

In PSHE, the children reflected on their own strengths and talents, as well as areas they would like to improve. Working in pairs or small groups, they completed a "Match the Roles and Skills" activity, where they discussed different roles and identified the skills needed for each.

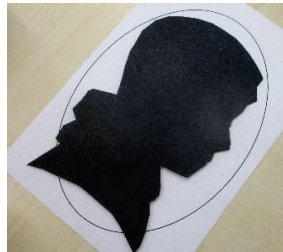


In Willow Class, we have begun the new summer term full of energy and enthusiasm for our learning and our exciting new topics!

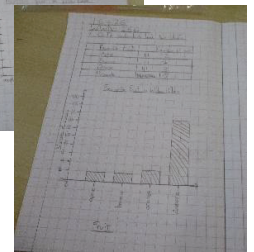
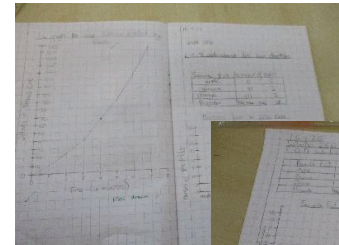
In History, we launched our topic '*Revolution: Full Steam Ahead?*', where we are exploring the Victorian era. We began by studying a portrait of Queen Victoria very closely, noticing every detail. Working collaboratively, we then used scaling and enlarging techniques to recreate the image as one large, impressive class portrait. We showed great care in colour matching our paints, and the final piece will truly capture Queen Victoria's character! Watch this space!



We also explored how Victorians used silhouettes to capture the likeness of loved ones—very different from simply taking a quick photo nowadays! We had a go at creating our own silhouettes, and we think we did a brilliant job capturing our unique features.



In Maths, we have started our new topic on statistics. We have been learning how to interpret line graphs, dual bar charts and pie charts. They have been asking thoughtful questions about data and have even begun drawing their own line graphs with increasing accuracy.



PE has been full of action this week. In athletics, we focused on the javelin, practising our throwing techniques and building our coordination and control. We learnt that getting the right 'run up' and releasing the javelin at its highest point really helps the javelin to travel a greater distance. In Dance, we worked in groups to create our own routines. Each dance had to include a canon, a clear start and finish position, as well as a twist, a turn and a jump.



In

Computing, we explored 3D modelling and looked at 3D shapes from different perspectives. We enjoyed thinking about how objects appear from different angles and began creating our own models. We moved, resized and duplicated objects. Next we will plan, develop and evaluate our own 3D model.

