

Dear Families,

Welcome back to a new year and a fresh school term! We hope you had a restful and enjoyable break and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year. The children have returned to school brimming with energy and enthusiasm for learning, although we must admit that the adjustment to full weeks and frosty mornings has been a challenge—for adults and children alike!

The Spring Term promises to be a busy and exciting one, packed with enriching visits, engaging assemblies, and adventurous trips. Already, new topics have kicked off, and just this morning, I had the pleasure of a group of children eagerly sharing their science books with me, proudly explaining what they've been learning and why they love science here at Little Hadham Primary. Their excitement was infectious, they even told me they'd like more quizzes!

The start of a new year often inspires us to refocus and set goals, and one resolution we encourage every family to embrace in 2025 is frequent reading at home. Research consistently shows that regular reading at home is one of the most effective ways to support a child's education and development.

Did you know that building a strong vocabulary is essential for academic success? Studies indicate that children who read widely and often not only perform better in English but also excel in subjects like maths and science because of their ability to comprehend instructions and articulate their thoughts. Yet, with increasing time spent on screens, many children are not developing the language skills they need to thrive.

Reading together—whether it's a bedtime story, a chapter book, or discussing a news article—helps bridge this gap. It fosters a love of learning, sparks imagination, and strengthens critical thinking skills. These shared moments also create cherished family memories and a foundation for future success.

If you would like advice or resources to support your child's reading or academic progress, please don't hesitate to speak with their class teacher. We're here to help and would love to work with you in nurturing a love of reading and language at home.

Have a lovely weekend,  
Sinead Connolly, Headteacher

### Afterschool Club Vacancy

We are currently recruiting for a part-time Afterschool Club member of staff

Hours: 6-12 hours per week Monday-Thursday 3-6pm (Flexible) Term Time

Salary: Information supplied upon request. If you would like to apply please call the school on 01279771285 for an application form. The post holder will need to undertake a DBS check and shortlisted candidates will be subject to online searches as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process.

### Diary Dates

- 22/01/25 Farmers' Market
- 27/01/25 Learning Together Morning Maple
- 28/01/25 Learning Together Morning Willow
- 29/01/25 Learning Together Morning EYFS
- 30/01/25 Learning Together Morning Lime
- 31/01/25 Learning Together Morning Beech
- 14/02/25 Half-Term Begins @3:15
- 24/02/25 Back to School

### Loose Parts @Little Hadham Primary

This term, we're looking to replenish our loose parts play resources. Loose parts are versatile items like tyres, crates, wooden planks, and tarpaulins that spark creativity and allow children to play in endless ways—from building pirate ships to creating obstacle courses or dens.

If you have any of the following items cluttering up your home or garden shed, we'd love to give them a new lease of life! Donations can be dropped off at the school office.

### We're looking for:

- Tarpaulins (various sizes, types, and colours)
- Milk and bread crates
- Wooden pallets (tough and in good condition)
- Tough buckets
- Cable drums or reels
- Tubes, guttering, funnels, hosepipes, bore pipes
- Ramps and lengths of plastic or corrugated transparent plastic
- Nets
- Tyres (bicycle, motorbike, go-kart, or car tyres)
- Large shallow trays
- Trolleys for tidying up
- Wheelbarrows

Article 24 ***Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. (UNICEF Rights of the child)***

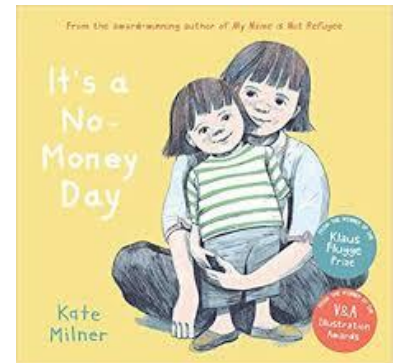
In this fortnight's empathy assembly, we explored *It's a No-Money Day* by Kate Milner, a moving story that highlights the challenges of food insecurity through the eyes of a child.

The narrative gave us the opportunity to reflect on the importance of foodbanks and the vital role they play in supporting families in our communities. Through heartfelt illustrations and simple yet impactful text, the story opened a door for our children to think about kindness, dignity, and support for those in need.

The children shared thoughtful insights, reflecting on how they felt for the characters in the story and the situations they faced. Here are some of the comments that stood out:

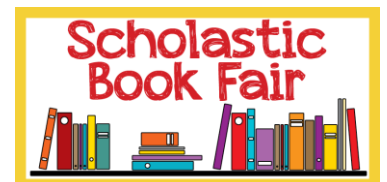
- “The mum was embarrassed, but she shouldn’t be because it’s not her fault.”
- “If I was the little girl, I would have told my mum it’s okay – I still love her no matter what.”

The school council are going to come back with some good ideas on what we as a school can do to help, so watch this space!



### **Exciting News: Scholastic Book Fair Coming Soon!**

We are thrilled to announce that the Scholastic Book Fair will be visiting our school from **Wednesday 26th March to Tuesday 1st April!** This fantastic event is designed to inspire and ignite a love of reading in our children by bringing a super selection of books right to the very heart of our school through a vibrant pop-up book shop.



The Book Fair will be **open each day from 2.45pm until 3.10pm**, providing a perfect opportunity for parents and children to explore a wonderful array of literature together. We encourage all families to take part in this exciting event that helps foster a passion for reading, discovering new stories and adventures side by side.

During these times, our dedicated School Captains will kindly assist by collecting your child from their class, ensuring a smooth transition to the Book Fair. Parents are most welcome to browse the selections and make purchases alongside their children. We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating the joy of reading together!

***Mrs. Tweedale***

***English Subject Lead***

## News from the classes...

This week in Early Years we have been continuing our enjoyment of our key text, *The Magic Paintbrush*, by Julia Donaldson! In the story, the main character Shen paints a fearsome dragon. As you can imagine, this really sparked the interest of the children, who enjoy lots of dragon role-play games during their choosing time! Mrs Lawrence showed them how to draw simple dragons by following numbered, pictorial instructions. The children loved the process of this, and it encouraged them to try drawing one themselves. They also loved making dragons using junk modelling resources, and some even had a go at labelling the features of their dragons too!



In maths, five little speckled frogs have been jumping around our classroom challenging us to see how many were hidden in the pool! This has been a really motivating activity and has helped Ash class to begin building their knowledge of number bonds to five and representing these as calculations. Saplings have also been chasing after our cheeky frogs, which has helped them to focus on representing amounts in different ways, such as with their fingers or counters.



The children's listening skills are developing well, which is particularly noticeable during

carpet times. P4C found the children listening to one another's ideas about which 'sticky' thing would be best to fix Humpty Dumpty, and circle time with Harold had children sharing and thinking about how to keep our bodies safe.



This super listening continued into our first yoga session of the half term, focusing on poses and repeating movements. The children enjoyed learning their first sun salutation, where they said hello to the sun and then tickled their toes in a forward fold!



In year 1 English lessons, we have been exploring the delightful story, *'There's a Tiger in My Garden'* by Lizzy Stewart. The children have used their imaginations to bring the story to life through hot seating, taking on the roles of the girl and other characters to discuss whether she should venture into the garden. They also explored conscience alley, debating the pros and cons of stepping into such a mysterious place. This activity sparked lively



discussions and helped the children think critically about decision-making and consequences. To deepen their connection with the story, the children wrote diary entries as the girl, reflecting on her feelings and experiences.

In Year 2, our focus has been on the inspiring text *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires. The children explored persuasive language to encourage the main character to continue her efforts despite her frustrations. They wrote diary entries that captured the emotions of perseverance and determination while practicing their persuasive writing skills. One child wrote:

*"My opinion is her invention has the potential to be the most spectacular and unique thing ever created, and ultimately, how would you stop her from achieving something truly ground breaking?"*

This activity helped the children build empathy and develop confidence in expressing their ideas through writing.

In Year 1 maths, we have been learning about mass and measurement, using vocabulary such as "heavier," "lighter," "balanced," and "equal to" to describe and compare objects. The children enjoyed practical activities like weighing classroom items and predicting their mass, which helped them grasp these concepts in a hands-on way.

In Year 2, we have been focusing on pictograms and solving word problems based on data. The children have learned to interpret information, identify patterns, and answer questions such as “How many more?” or “Which is the least?” These skills are essential for developing critical thinking and reasoning abilities.

In Geography we’ve continued our learning about the UK, with a focus on the seas and oceans that surround it. The children have learned to locate and name the North Sea, Irish Sea, English Channel, and the Atlantic Ocean on maps. This knowledge is helping them understand the geography of our country and the importance of these waterways in trade, travel, and wildlife.

This term, we’ve started yoga, and the children have been thoroughly enjoying this calming and energising activity. They’ve been learning to relate different poses to sea creatures, such as the dolphin pose and starfish stretch, which makes it easier for them to remember sequences while having fun. Yoga has helped the children improve their focus, flexibility, and mindfulness, providing a moment of relaxation in their busy day.

This week in Lime Class, we’ve had a very busy and exciting time across all our subjects! In English, we explored the classic poem *From a Railway Carriage* by Robert Louis Stevenson. We examined the poem’s rhyme, rhythm, and rich vocabulary, as well as its unique form and style. Inspired by a video, we wrote our own descriptive pieces about a steam train, bringing it to life with vivid imagery. We also sharpened our grammar skills by learning about simple and compound sentences, applying this knowledge to our writing.

In Maths, Year 3 have been focusing on multiplication and division, mastering their 8 times table with lots of practice and games. Meanwhile, Year 4 started a new unit on area. They enjoyed a hands-on session measuring objects and spaces around the classroom, using these practical activities to deepen their understanding of how to calculate area. It’s been fantastic to see everyone working hard and developing their problem-solving skills.



Our Art lessons were filled with colour and creativity this week. We began by labelling the colour samples we created last week, using a colour chart to learn the names of new shades. We then took inspiration from the works of J.M.W. Turner, exploring how he used light and colour in his paintings to create stunning effects. This was a great opportunity for the class to appreciate how artists express mood and atmosphere through colour.

Geography took us on a journey to Italy, where we learned about the two main mountain ranges by looking at a physical map. We located and named some of their highest mountains and used photographs to see what they looked like in real life.

In Computing, we had lots of fun coding a musical solar system on the Hour of Code website. Working in pairs, the children followed step-by-step instructions and collaborated to bring their creative ideas to life. In PHSE, we discussed the topic of dares, focusing on why they can be dangerous and how to say no with confidence. We role played some situations, thinking about how we can respond to dares in a safe and sensible way. It was a valuable session that helped us reflect on the importance of making safe and sensible choices. Well done, Lime Class, for another fantastic week of learning!



This week in Maple class, the children continued exploring our class book, *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. They read about Macbeth's encounter with the witches and the plotting of King Duncan's murder. The children answered comprehension and inference questions, referring to the text to support their answers. They also used thesauruses and dictionaries to explore the meanings of unfamiliar words and to find synonyms, enhancing their vocabulary and understanding of the text.



In Maths, the children worked on multiplying numbers using the written method of short multiplication. They applied this method to solve a variety of problems, building their confidence and accuracy in performing calculations.



In History, the children learned about the early years of space exploration from the 1940s to the 1970s. They focused on Yuri Gagarin, the first person in space (Soviet Union, 1961), and the importance of his achievement. They also looked at the Space Race between the USA and the Soviet Union and how it led to new technologies. The children wrote non-fiction texts about Yuri Gagarin, showing what they learned about his life and impact on space exploration.

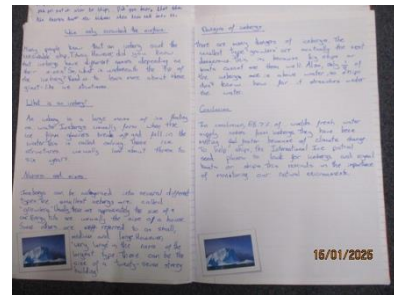
In Art, the children learned about the life and artwork of Vincent van Gogh, focusing on some famous paintings, including the 'Sunflowers'. They created their own observational drawings, carefully studying the details and shapes of the sunflowers and drawing inspiration from Van Gogh's style.



In PE, the children focused on asymmetrical balances, emphasising strong body tension to maintain control and stability. They also enjoyed collaborating with a partner to create and practice partner balances, exploring creativity and teamwork in their movements.

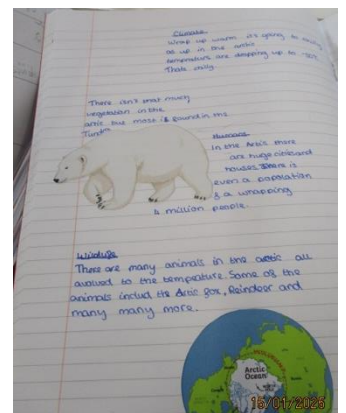


Another exciting week draws to a close in Willow Class. This week has been filled with exploration, creativity, and some fantastic discoveries.



In English, our focus has been on developing our skills in planning and editing non-chronological reports. We embraced the challenge, learning to construct well-organised pieces that convey information effectively. We have placed particular emphasis on using the present tense and incorporating subject-specific and technical language to add precision to our writing. This week, we dived deep into researching icebergs and what makes these magnificent natural giants so fascinating. By the end of the week, many of us felt quite like experts on the subject!

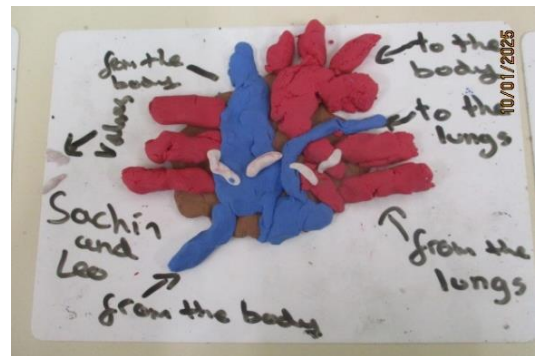
In conjunction with our English lessons, we ventured into the realm of Physical Geography, where we explored the Arctic and Antarctic polar regions. Like true intrepid explorers, we had to hunt for information and record our findings. This week, the terminology we encountered expanded our vocabulary, introducing us to the word 'topography'—features of the landscape. We took time to learn about the distinct features of these polar landscapes, examining their climate and environment. Following our research, we had the opportunity to compare and contrast the two regions before presenting our findings creatively.



Art this week was another highlight! We showcased our creativity and skills using various drawing and blending techniques with chalk. We focused on creating beautiful depictions of polar bears, drawing inspiration from the information gathered in our Geography lessons. We thoroughly enjoyed illustrating these majestic creatures with true artist flair!



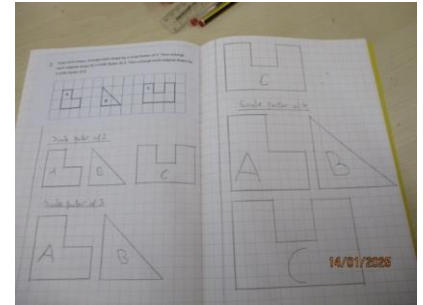
In Science, our focus was on the circulatory system, with particular attention paid to the heart's function. We discovered that a person's heart is approximately the size of their fist—an interesting fact that prompted lots of discussion! To deepen our understanding, we made plasticine models of the heart. This gave us a practical way to learn about how the heart works, demonstrating how blood circulates throughout the body. We then used our models to help us explain the function of the different parts of the heart. We also found a way of remembering whether it is the arteries or the veins that carry blood away from the heart. Arteries carry blood away from the heart. Veins take blood into the heart!



PE this week certainly raised our heart rates! Thank you to Abigail and Belle who took the initiative to expertly lead us through a series of warm-up stretches to ensure all our muscles and joints were ready for action. Their leadership skills are commendable! Following the warm-up, we focused on rolls, revisiting the elements needed for a successful forward roll. We showed enthusiasm while perfecting our straddle (or teddy bear) rolls – always good fun!



In maths, we have been continuing our learning about ratio and scale factors. We learnt that the term '*similar*' in mathematics refers to an enlargement of shapes. We practised identifying different scale factors and enlarging various shapes with increasing accuracy before then moving on to solve ratio problems.



### **Staff Inset: *When the Adults Change, Everything Changes***

We wanted to share some insights from our recent staff training day, which focused on the inspiring work of Paul Dix, a leading expert in behaviour management and creating positive school cultures. The training, based on his principles from *When the Adults Change, Everything Changes*, left us feeling motivated and equipped with new strategies to continue to support every child in our school.

#### **Paul Dix's Book for Parents**

Paul Dix also offers guidance for parents through his book *When Parents Change, Everything Changes*. This highly practical guide emphasizes the power of calm, consistent, and kind interactions in transforming relationships with children. It encourages us to focus on building trust, setting clear expectations, and reinforcing positive behaviour without resorting to raised voices or punitive measures.

Key themes include:

- The impact of calm and consistent adult behaviour.
- Using positive reinforcement to encourage lasting change.
- Strategies for responding to challenging moments with empathy.

#### **Quick Tip: "8 out of 10"**

One takeaway our staff loved and we want to share is, Paul's "8 out of 10" approach. He suggests aiming to get things right about 8 times out of 10, rather than striving for perfection. This mindset helps parents (and staff!) remain kind to themselves, acknowledge their efforts, and keep building better habits without feeling overwhelmed by occasional missteps. We can't all be perfect all of the time!

#### **Staff Reflections**

Our team found the training incredibly useful and insightful. It has reinforced our commitment to creating a calm, nurturing environment where every child feels respected and valued. The strategies discussed align beautifully with our ethos and will help us continue to model the behaviour we want to see in our pupils.

We encourage you to explore Paul Dix's book and try applying some of his tips at home. Together, we can foster positive and lasting change in the lives of our children- as they say it takes a village!