School Newsletter

FRIDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2026

Headteacher's insight



As we reach the end of our first half term of the academic year, I would like to thank all our children, families and staff for their hard work, enthusiasm and support over the past seven weeks. It has been a busy and positive start to the year, and I hope everyone enjoys a well-deserved half-term break.



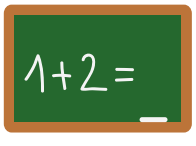
One of the highlights of this half term has been the start of our **Sports Alliance programme,** with children enjoying a football tournament and, this week, a cross-country event. We feel incredibly fortunate to be able to offer our children these opportunities to represent their schools, experience different sports and compete alongside children from other local schools. The benefits extend far beyond physical fitness. We see children developing confidence, resilience, teamwork, determination and a sense of belonging. Learning to celebrate success, manage disappointment, encourage others and challenge themselves are valuable life skills, and it is wonderful to see our children growing through these experiences. We look forward to many more Sports Alliance events throughout the year.



This week, I would also like to focus on something that makes an enormous difference to children's confidence and success in mathematics: **knowing their number facts securely and being able to recall them quickly and accurately.**



Just as learning to read fluently opens the door to enjoying and understanding increasingly complex texts, becoming fluent with number facts allows children to tackle more challenging mathematics with confidence.



It begins with **number bonds –** understanding how numbers fit together and relate to one another. For example, knowing that 7 + 3 = 10 also helps children recognise that 10 − 7 = 3 and 10 − 3 = 7. As children develop, this understanding extends to number bonds to 20, 100 and beyond. Importantly, we want children not simply to memorise answers, but to understand the relationships between numbers so they can apply their knowledge flexibly.

As children progress through school, **times tables become equally important.** Secure knowledge of multiplication and division facts supports almost every aspect of mathematics, including fractions, percentages, division, area and problem-solving. When children can recall these facts automatically, they have more mental capacity available to concentrate on the new learning and reasoning in front of them, rather than using all their energy on basic calculations.



The key to securing these skills is regular, short bursts of practice. Five minutes each day is far more effective than one long session each week. Half term provides a lovely opportunity to build some of this practice into everyday family life without it feeling like homework. You might:



Practise number bonds while travelling in the car or walking to the park – “I’ve got 6, how many more make 10?”
Play quick-fire number games using dice, playing cards or dominoes.
Ask children to spot patterns in their times tables or explain how they worked something out.
Encourage older children to spend five minutes on Times Tables Rock Stars, aiming to improve their own speed and accuracy.
Use everyday opportunities, such as shopping, cooking or sharing treats, to explore number relationships.



Above all, **keep it positive, playful and achievable.** Children need opportunities to experience success, and celebrating small improvements helps build the confidence and motivation to keep practising. Accuracy and understanding should always come before speed, with quicker recall developing through familiarity and repetition.Our aim is for every child to develop the strong mathematical foundations that allow them to approach new challenges with confidence. The partnership between school and home makes a real difference, and a few minutes of regular practice at home can have a lasting impact.



Finally, I wish all our families a happy, restful and enjoyable half term. Whether you are heading away, enjoying days out or simply spending time together at home, I hope you have a wonderful break.

We look forward to welcoming all children back to school on Tuesday 3rd November, ready for another exciting half term of learning.



Mrs Thompson

Mrs Emily Thompson
Executive Headteacher

Learner Review Meetings



The Learner Review meetings will take place during the week beginning Monday **17th November.**

Each class teacher will offer a **10-minute appointment for each child**, where the parent/carer and the child (where appropriate) will have the opportunity to review their learning and progress so far this academic year. For our youngest children, it may not be appropriate for them to attend, and teachers will advise accordingly.

Appointments will be available between **08.30 - 16.00 (please see the table below)** If you require more flexibility, please do contact us so we can see what we can do to support.

Bookings are open on My Child at School (MCAS). If you experience any difficulties accessing the system or booking your slot, please contact the school office who will be happy to help.

We look forward to welcoming you to these valuable conversations about your child's learning journey.

Date	Class	Times
Tuesday 17h November	Owls (Year 5)	08.30- 16.00
Thursday 19th November	Dragonflies (Year 1/2) Squirrels (Year 3/4)	08.30 - 16.00
Friday 20th November	Butterflies (Reception)	08.30 - 11.30
Friday 20th November	Badgers (Year 6)	08.30 - 12.00

Book Advent Calendar Raffle – A Festive Treat for Young Readers!

With 1st December fast approaching, we are delighted to bring back our **Book Advent Calendar Raffle** following its success last year!

We have prepared **three wonderful book advent calendars** for three lucky winners, with prizes tailored to different age groups:



Prize 1: EYFS and Year 1

Prize 2: Years 2 and 3

Prize 3: Years 4, 5 and 6

Each advent calendar contains **24 individually wrapped and numbered books,** ready for the lucky winner to unwrap and enjoy one each day throughout Advent. What better way to count down to Christmas than by discovering a new story every day?

Raffle entries cost just £2 each, and families are welcome to purchase as many entries as they wish. The more entries you buy, the greater your chances of winning!

How to enter:
Entries open: Today!
Where to enter: Through My Child At School (MCAS)
Closing date: Sunday 29th November
Prize draw: Monday 30th November

The draw will take place in plenty of time for our three lucky winners to receive their book advent calendars, ready to start opening them on **1st December.**

We hope lots of families will join in the festive fun and help us celebrate the joy of reading throughout December. Good luck, everyone!





Junior Travel Ambassadors – Be Bright, Be Seen Competition!

As the days get darker, it is really important to stay safe and make sure people can see you. That's why we are inviting you to take part in our **Be Bright, Be Seen Colouring and Poster Competition,** which is happening over half term.

🎨 **Reception and Key Stage 1** children can colour one of our special colouring sheets, showing how people can stay safe by wearing bright or reflective clothes.

🖍️ **Key Stage 2** children can design and create their own colourful poster to share the same important message.

🏆 There will be prizes for the winners in each age group, and the winning entries will be displayed around school for everyone to see!

📅 Please bring your completed entry back to school by **Wednesday 4th November.**

Good luck, have fun, and get creative!

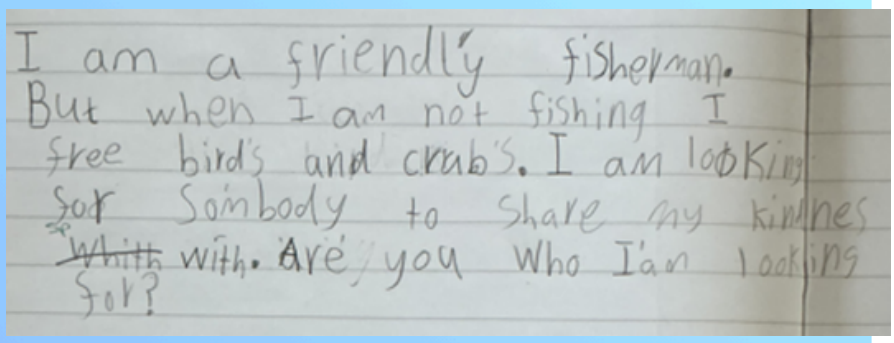
The JTAs 😊🚶✨🚶



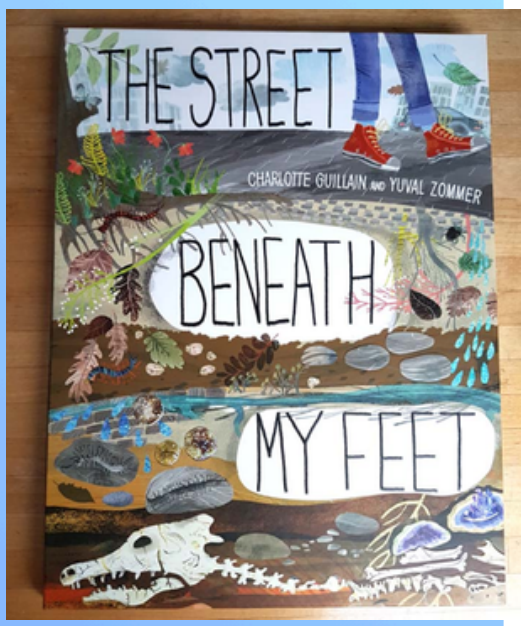
News from our classrooms

Squirrels Class

It has been a busy couple of weeks in Squirrels, with new books to explore, scientific investigations to carry out and artwork to share. Here is a look at what we have been learning.


I am a friendly fisherman. But when I am not fishing I free bird's and crab's. I am looking for Sombody to share my kindnes with. Are you Who I'an looking for?

In our **writing lessons** we have started our new book, **Nen and the lonely Fisherman.** We began by exploring how the characters feel at the beginning of the story, thinking carefully about their loneliness and what they might be hoping for. The children then wrote lonely hearts adverts for the lonely characters, considering how to describe their personalities and the companionship they were looking for.



Our new **reading** book, **The Street Beneath My Feet**, has taken us on a journey underground. We have explored the first few layers beneath the surface, discovering more about the world hidden below us. We have also examined the book's unusual layout and discussed how its illustrations and information work together to guide the reader through this fascinating journey.

In **Maths**, we have begun our new addition and subtraction unit. We have been using number lines to help us add and subtract across a number boundary. By splitting calculations into manageable jumps, the children have been developing strategies to calculate more efficiently. Our focus has been on understanding each step and explaining how these methods help us reach an answer.

We have been investigating magnets through practical activities in our **Science** lessons. The children tested different materials to find out which were magnetic and compared the strength of different magnets. These investigations gave us opportunities to make predictions, observe carefully and use our results to draw conclusions.

Squirrels Class continued...

Our **final portraits** are nearing completion. These include symbols that represent aspects of the children's identities, helping each portrait tell a personal story. We also held a classroom gallery, taking time to look closely at one another's **artwork.** The children identified symbols in their classmates' portraits and considered what these might tell us about the artist.

We have been exploring the jobs children did in the past, focusing on Tudor apprentices and Victorian children working in coal mines. This has helped us think about how children's lives have changed over time.

In **French,** we have continued practising greetings, introducing ourselves and asking other people how they are. The children have been building their confidence in using these phrases as part of a short conversation.

In **RE**, we have been exploring ideas about the soul. We have considered what people mean when they talk about the soul and why people may hold different beliefs about it. Our discussions have encouraged thoughtful questions and respectful listening to different viewpoints.





Owls Class

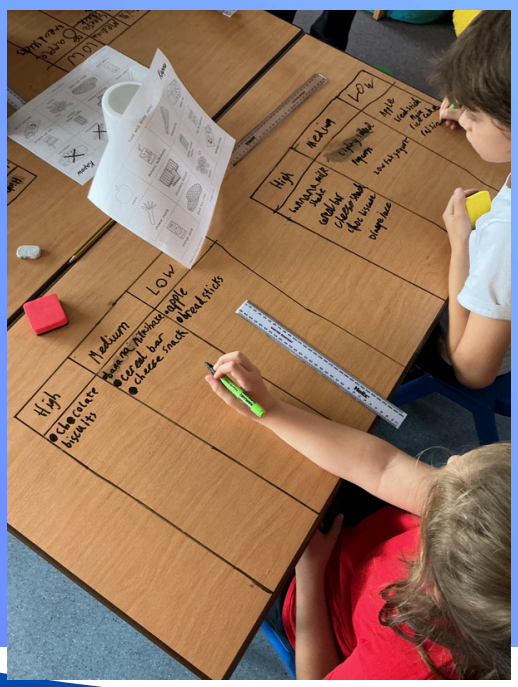
What a busy and exciting few weeks Owls Class has had!

In **Maths,** we have begun our multiplication and division units. The children have been exploring **square numbers, cube numbers, common factors and multiples.** Our Year 4 pupils have also been developing their multiplication skills through a range of fun and engaging games, including Multiplication Four in a Row and Times Table Snakes and Ladders.

In **English,** we have continued our learning about the inspiring women featured in Hidden Figures: **Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan**. The children wrote persuasive letters in role as Mary Jackson, asking the city manager for permission to attend an all-white school so that she could pursue her dreams. They also wrote diary entries from the perspective of women involved in programming the IBM computers, expressing thoughts and feelings using ambitious adjectives and superlatives.

Our **PSHE** lessons have focused on Being My Healthy Self. We have explored how to support both our minds and bodies as we grow, investigated what food labels can tell us, and discussed how this information can help us make healthier choices. We have also reflected on our activity levels and considered ways to stay active throughout the day.

In **Science**, we have been investigating the factors that affect how quickly substances dissolve. The children planned and carried out a fair test, exploring how different water temperatures impact dissolving times. They carefully considered variables, made accurate measurements and analysed their results to draw conclusions.





Badgers Class



This week in Badgers, we have continued to develop our understanding of division in **Maths.** We used arrays to help us divide and explored how these representations link to the bus stop method. We have also been introduced to long division, learning the first steps of this new written method and beginning to understand how it can help us solve more complex calculations.

In **Science**, we have been carefully observing the ivy around our school grounds, looking for changes over the course of the week. We discussed what we noticed, recorded our observations, and considered how plants change over time and respond to their environment.

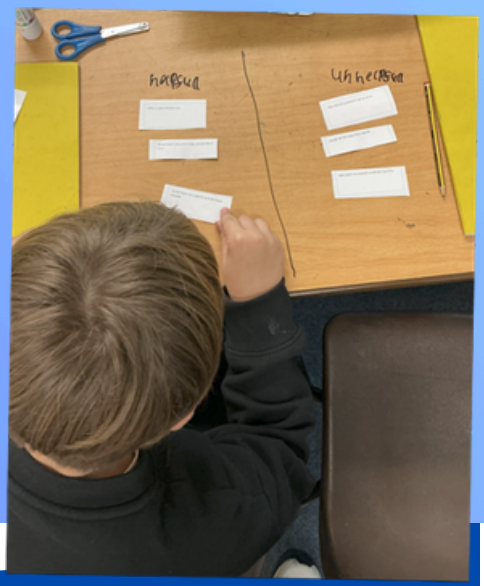


As part of our **RE** learning, we have been researching inspirational people, finding out about individuals who have shown determination, resilience, and courage. The children enjoyed discovering how these people have made a positive difference to others and reflecting on the qualities that inspire them.

In **History**, we continued our census project by investigating what life was like in Fen Ditton in the 1900s. Using historical records and sources, we enquired about the local area, the people who lived there, and how daily life has changed over time. The children asked thoughtful questions and showed great curiosity as young historians.

Well done, Badgers, for another fantastic week of learning !





New Lunch Menus



Reminder

Please remember to place any meal orders by 1am on the day to ensure your child receives a school dinner. If there has been no orders placed, you will need to send your child to school with a home packed lunch.

Thank you as always for your support with this.

Key Dates/Events



Events - Autumn term

There are several curriculum events being held during school time that your child will be able to tell you about and we will share in the newsletter and on social media. Below are a list of only dates that we feel are most important for parents to be aware of or may require some support/action. We hope it is helpful to have these dates in advance.

OCTOBER

- **Friday 23rd October:** PTFA Halloween Bake Sale
- **October half term:** 26th - 30th October

NOVEMBER

- **Monday 2nd November:** INSET Day - School not open for children
- **Monday 9th November:** Tea towel order deadline for parents and carers
- **Tuesday 10th November, 3pm - 3.20pm: Badgers** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Friday 13th November:** Non uniform day - donations welcomed to support the Christmas Fair
- **Monday 16th to Friday 20th November:** Learner Review meetings for each pupil and parent/carer from Reception to Year 6. Each family will make a 10 minute appointment and attend in person or online to review their child's learning with the class teacher.
- **Tuesday 17th November, 3pm - 3.20pm: Owls** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Tuesday 24th November, 3pm - 3.20pm: Squirrels** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Friday 27th November:** Confirmation of Spring term clubs schedule and arrangements for securing places to be shared with parents and carers
- **Sunday 29th November:** Deadline for Book Advent Calendar Raffle tickets purchasing
- **Monday 30th November:** Winners of Book Advent Calendar Raffle announced and prizes given

DECEMBER

- **Thursday 10th December:** Parent and Child Workshop Year 3 and 4 - Times Tables 3:30-4pm
- **Friday 11th December:** Christmas Fair 3:30-4:45pm
- **Friday 11th December:** Christmas Jumper Day
- **Thursday 17th December:** Last Day of Term - School closes for Christmas



Tea towels must be ordered by Monday 9th November, orders via MCAS for £8 each.

FEN DITTON C.P SCHOOL

ANGLIAN LEARNING

Reception Open Day 2027

We invite you to visit **Fen Ditton Community Primary School**, **register today for a group tour.**







Group Tour Dates & Times

Monday 5 Oct, 11am - 11:45am
Monday 12 Oct, 2pm - 2:45pm
Monday 19 Oct, 4pm - 4:45pm
Monday 9 Nov, 11am - 11:45am
Monday 16 Nov, 2pm - 2:45pm

REGISTER NOW

If your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023 you need to apply for Reception for September 2027.

Deadline for applications is 15th January 2027

AUTUMN TERM 2026

Autumn 1 Term Starts – Friday 4 September
Autumn 1 Term Ends – Friday 23 October
Half Term - 26 October - 30 October
Inset Day – Monday 2 November
Autumn 2 Term Starts– Tuesday 3 November
Autumn 2 Term Ends – Thursday 17 December
Inset Day – Friday 18 December
21 December – 1 January – Christmas Holidays

SPRING TERM 2027

Inset Day – Monday 4 January
Spring Term 1 Starts – Tuesday 5 January
Spring Term 1 Ends – Friday 12 February
Half Term - 15 February - 19 February
Spring Term 2 Starts – Monday 22 February
Spring Term 2 Ends – Thursday 25 March
Friday 26 March – Friday 10 April – Easter Holidays

SUMMER TERM 2027

Summer Term 1 Starts – Monday 12 April
May Bank Holiday – Monday 3 May
Summer Term 1 Ends – Friday 28 May
Half Term - 31 May – 4 June
Summer Term 2 Starts – Monday 7 June
Inset Day – Friday 2 July
Summer Term 2 Ends – Wednesday 21 July





Find the term dates for 2027-2028 here