



*Through our love of God and of each other, our children will thrive personally and academically in a happy, safe place of faith and high expectation for all*

19.12.25

## *A compilation of news from around the school...*

In **EYFS**, the children have continued exploring writing for different purposes, including listing and labelling. We have focused on recognising initial sounds and have begun moving towards writing CVC words with increasing independence. The children have worked incredibly hard on improving their pencil grip and letter formation. Continued practice over the holidays would be greatly appreciated, and we would love for you to share photos with us via Tapestry.

In Maths, EYFS have developed their understanding of numbers 1–5. They also explored different four-sided shapes, using their properties and taught vocabulary to describe them. We even enjoyed going on another shape hunt around the school. Who knew shapes were everywhere we looked!

In Science, the children demonstrated their knowledge of different types of animals and worked collaboratively to sort them into the correct categories.

In PSHE, we explored what it means to be a good friend, as well as how to assert our own boundaries. We discussed how everyone likes different things and that this is okay. We finished the term by thinking about the important people in our lives who help and support us.

**Year 1** successfully completed their nativity rehearsals and were delighted to share their performance with parents. EYFS also performed their songs to the school before welcoming parents to enjoy their performance. We are incredibly proud of all the children and the hard work, confidence, and enthusiasm they showed. We hope you enjoyed their performances as much as we did.

In Year 1 English, we finished the term exploring the book *Coming Home*. The children were highly engaged with the story and confidently retold key events. They explored setting descriptions and produced some lovely work inspired by the text, finishing the unit by creating their own narratives.

In Maths, Year 1 have continued to develop their addition and subtraction skills. The children have made fantastic progress this term and should be very proud of the effort and resilience they have shown.

**The St John's family are...**

**RESPECTFUL** by

- being thoughtful
- being patient
- being silent when walking around the school
- SLANTing in lessons and Collective Worship

**LOVING ONE ANOTHER** by

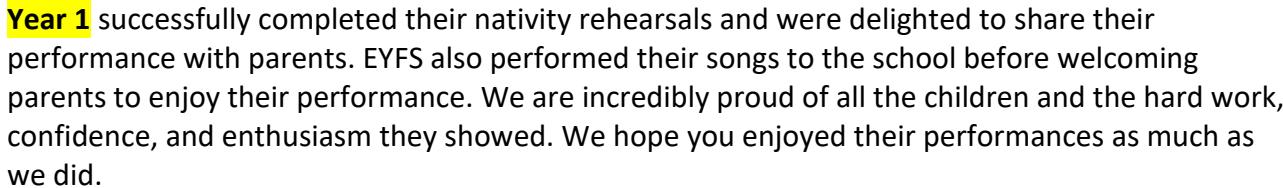
- being kind
- caring for and helping one another across the school
- being polite

**RESILIENT** by

- being hard working
- verbalising our emotions safely
- being the best ME I can be
- believing in yourself
- always engaging in our challenging learning



**THIS IS OUR PROMISE**





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Chair of Governors: J Walker

Deputy Headteacher: J Morrish BA (Hons) PGCE  
Assistant Headteacher H Chapman BEd (Hons) MA NASENCo Award

**Diocese of Ely**  
multi-academy trust





What a great first term **Year 2** have had in Woodpecker class. We have had our nativity, a trip to the library, a visit from a gladiator, and a video call with Santa! Year 2 have worked incredibly hard this half term; they have remained focused throughout the Nativity practices, and most importantly they have had fun!



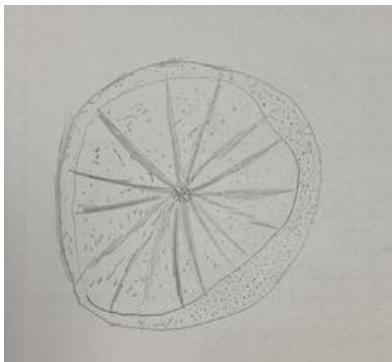
In mathematics this half term we have been learning about addition and subtraction. We have learnt about many ways that we can add, for example: partitioning a number to bridge ten, spotting number facts, rounding to ten and then compensating and many more. The children have been able to add a 2-digit number and a 2-digit number confidently and hopefully after the Christmas break they will remember all of the skills they have learnt thus far.

In English we finished our class story of *A Christmas Carol*. The children enjoyed reading about the places Scrooge visited on Christmas Eve, and they were able to comprehend the story well. Alongside this, we have been working hard on our handwriting, looking at extending simple sentences to make compound and complex sentences and we have written a variety of pieces either in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective.

In Science we have been learning about Animals and their habitats. As a class, we have thought about a range of different habitats from polar regions to rainforests. Woodpeckers have been able to spot animals that have been adapted for each habitat and how it helps them to survive in such conditions. We have also looked at food chains; the children have been able to understand that a food chain shows where the animals get their energy from.

In Art this term we have looked at colour, shape and texture. We have been focusing on the artwork of Henri Matisse and how he uses scissors to create his compositions. We worked together to create a piece of art; the children used their complimentary colour cut outs and thought carefully about the placement of shapes. We have also thought about creating visual textures. We have practiced our observational skills by sketching the inside of an orange and thinking about how we can show texture of different materials in our drawings.





In History we have learnt about the Romans. We have looked at who the Romans were and what made them so powerful. We have looked at the impact they had on countries but more specifically we have looked at the impact the Romans have had on England today. We looked at the names of towns, and the buildings and infrastructure that have evolved from the Romans. We also learnt about the revolt of Boudicca with the Iceni tribe.

We hope you have a wonderful Christmas, and we will see year 2 in the new year!



This fortnight in **Year 3**, Puffins and Chaffinch classes have been busy learners, exploring a wide range of exciting topics before we break up for the **Christmas holidays**!

In **English**, we have been writing clear and interesting **explanation texts**. We learned how to structure our writing with a title, engaging introduction, chronological order and a conclusion. The children practised using fronted adverbials like *first*, *then*, *next*, and *finally*, as well as ambitious, subject-specific vocabulary. After learning about the Ancient Egyptian process of **mummification**, everyone wrote their own explanation texts, showing how bodies were prepared and wrapped. The confidence in their writing really shone through!

In **Maths**, we have been measuring **length in millimetres and centimetres**, **mass in grams and kilograms**, and **capacity in millilitres**. The children applied their skills in practical activities, comparing containers, weighing ingredients and revisiting **times tables** to keep their fluency sharp.

In **History**, we travelled back in time to **Iron Age Britain**, learning how people lived in **tribes** and **hill forts**, used **iron tools and weapons**, and worshipped powerful spirits led by **druids**. The children explored roundhouses made of wattle and daube and imagined life in a warrior society before the Romans arrived.





In **Geography**, we compared the **human features** of two cities, **London and San Francisco**. Using maps and photographs, we looked at settlements, roads, bridges and transport systems. The children discovered that San Francisco is built on **around 40 hills** and has **cable cars** to help people travel, while the **Golden Gate Bridge** connects the city and helps trade. Comparing this with London's bridges across the Thames helped everyone understand how humans shape the places we live.

In **Art**, we explored **still life** and the work of **Paul Cézanne**, learning how artists use **tints, shades and layers of colour** to create form and make objects look three-dimensional. The children practised with **oil pastels**, drawing pears and other fruit, paying attention to **light, shadows and highlights**. Their artwork looked fantastic!

In **D&T**, the children put on their chef hats and made a **pasta bake**. They chopped vegetables like mushrooms, peppers, onions and tomatoes, mixed the sauce, layered all the ingredients and baked their creations. The kitchen was full of delicious smells, and everyone enjoyed tasting their colourful, healthy dishes.

In **Science**, we learned about the **life cycle of a frog**. From **frogspawn** to tadpole, young frog and finally adult, the children explored **metamorphosis** and drew diagrams showing each stage. They also discussed why many eggs do not survive and compared tadpoles with fully-grown frogs.

In **RE**, we reflected on the story of **Noah** and the theme of **forgiveness**. The children discussed how God showed mercy, gave second chances and kept promises, thinking about how this applies to our own lives.

In **PE**, we had a lot of fun practising **Egyptian dancing**! The children learned traditional movements, worked on posture, timing and flowing sequences, and performed their dances to music as a team. Next term, **PE will take place on Thursdays**, so don't forget to come prepared!

As we get ready to break up for the **Christmas holidays**, we want to say a huge well done to all the Puffins and Chaffinch children for their hard work and enthusiasm this term. **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!** We can't wait to see everyone back in 2026 for more learning adventures!





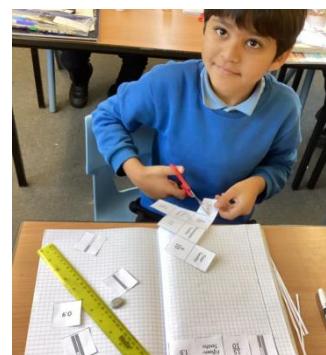
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In **Year 4's** Maths class we have been focusing on number including a decimal place. The children have looked at tenths and hundredths too. We have also been busy solving problems involving decimal fraction too. There, of course, has been a big focus on learning our times tables as usual. In English, we have focused on how to describe settings and characters. We have used the story A Christmas Carol to dissect the character Scrooge and have learnt to use a variety of different sentence types, ambitious vocabulary, adverbial phrases and expanded noun phrases to build characterization in writing.



In Geography we have been learning all about Mediterranean settlements including Venice, Rome and Athens. We have discovered the various features of the cities and have found out about the different cultures of the area. In RE, Year 4 have studied Christians beliefs. The children have studied teachings from the Bible, discussed how Christians might show these ideas in their own lives, and we have made connections with our own views and thoughts. In PE we have continued our topic of dance and in Art we have been busy learning about perspective: background, middle ground and foreground. We have also enjoyed the festivities at this time of year, especially Christmas Jumper Day, The Nativity play and Christmas dinner!





**Year 5**, Red kites and Falcons, have had their class collective worships. Lots of hard work, rehearsal and time went into making these a huge success for the children. It was wonderful that so many of you were able to make these and we are very grateful for your continued support. As we draw to the end



of our first term, we have been completing topics in the British Empire, Materials, Incarnation, Mountains, and Islamic art.

In history, the children reviewed the impact of the British Empire on both Britain and the colonies and



looked at the pros and cons for each before completing their assessment. In science, the children have reviewed their understanding on conductors and insulators and successfully completed unit



assessments. In geography, the children produced a mind map to demonstrate their understanding of the topic of mountains.

Our RE learning has focused on how Christmas has been become very commercial and how some Christians are looking to bring Christ back to the heart of Christmas celebrations. Christians believe the real



meaning behind Christmas is the birth of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. The children looked at TV adverts and had a go at writing the script for their own but putting Christ at heart.

In Art children have been practising and designing Islamic patterns ensuring symmetry and the use of geometric shapes. They will finish this



topic in the New Year by creating an Islamic tile out of clay.

In DT the children have been working on their Cam Toy project. They explored cam toys and their mechanisms, created their own design, built and then evaluated their products. WOW! This topic really fired imaginations (as you will no doubt see for yourselves) and harnessed all their creativity whilst showing a strong understanding of components for movements.



We have been incredibly proud of the children's efforts to write a narrative . The children wrote these in the first person as if they themselves had made a visit to Narnia- absolutely fantastic! They use "show not tell " to describe both how they felt and the behaviour of a mythical creature that they had met. They also used their descriptive language skills to retail events of a problem and further solution before returning home.



We have continued our work on addition and subtraction in maths. We have been looking at how to successfully calculate decimal numbers to 3 decimal places, to insert placeholder zeros, and how to interpret different problems featuring addition and subtraction. These include diagrams, balancing equations, what number am ?, and word problems.

It has been a super first term together in year five and we want to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas holiday . We look forward to welcoming red kites and falcons back in the New Year.





In English, **Year 6** have been gripped by the dramatic events of Chapter 19 in 'The 1000 Year Old Boy'. We used this key chapter as inspiration to master the art of writing realistic and engaging dialogue.

The children have moved far beyond the basics, following the "Golden Rule" of new speaker, new line to keep their writing clear. We have focused on banishing the word "said," replacing it with powerful synonyms and varying the position of the reporting clause (e.g., moving it to the middle or end of a sentence) to change the rhythm of the story.

To make the characters truly speak, we explored how punctuation captures voice. The children experimented with ellipses (...) for hesitation, dashes (-) for interruptions, and apostrophes to show informal speech or accents. Crucially, we worked on "showing, not telling"—using a character's actions (like "shaking with fear" or "wiping sweat") to convey emotion rather than just stating it.

As the grand finale to our Geography unit, the children took to the stage this week to present their findings on a very pressing issue: why litter is a problem in the UK.

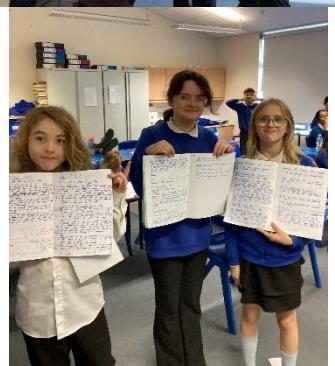
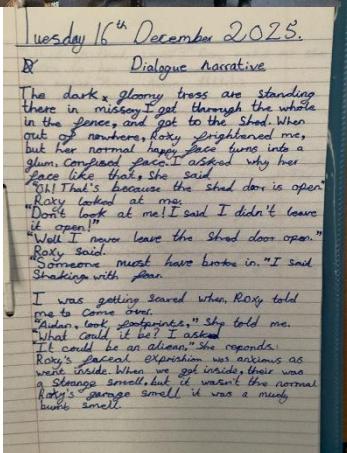
The class went far beyond standard presentations. They brought the topic to life with incredible creativity, using dramatic sketches to show the chaos of pollution and designing bold posters to promote solutions. They were highlighting the importance of using bins and recycling to protect our environment. It was wonderful to see them so passionate about caring for their country and developing the confidence to speak (and act!) in front of an audience.

In Art, we have been stepping back into the studios of the Renaissance

to compare the masterpieces of Donatello and Michelangelo. We analysed their sculptures to understand how they made stone and bronze look like living, breathing human figures.

A key focus was learning the term contrapposto (counterpose). This is a technique where a figure stands with most of their weight on one leg, causing their shoulders and hips to tilt in opposite directions—Michelangelo's famous *David* is an exemplary example of this relaxed, natural stance!

Building on the observational drawing skills we developed last half-term, the children were challenged to sketch a figure in this classic pose. As you can see from their sketchbooks, they worked incredibly hard to capture the complex "S-curve" of the spine and the realistic proportions of the body.



*Wishing all our families and friends a fabulous Christmas break*



Just a reminder that we are a Nut Free School so please ensure that any products, including drinks, do not contain any element of nut based produce. Thank you.

