



MILE OAK NEWSLETTER



FRIDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2023

Autumn 2 Newsletter



Dear Families,

We have reached the end of an incredibly busy autumn term. There has been so much to celebrate over the weeks and so much progress and development has happened across the school. Children are making excellent progress in their learning and we continue to offer them a broad and balanced curriculum with many opportunities to enhance their learning experiences.

Our pupils continue to be the most wonderful ambassadors for the school and represent the values that we hold so dear. They have all worked exceptionally hard and deserve a well-earned rest ready for the start of the new term in January.

The children's performances in the Christmas concerts have been inspiring and magical. All the children have demonstrated what amazing performers and stars they are! We feel so incredibly proud of them all and know that you are too.

A huge thank you to FOMO for the wonderful Christmas fair they organised and ran this month. A wonderful afternoon that brought the whole community together to celebrate and enjoy the festive spirit. Thank you to Santa for dropping by to see all the children; we know just how busy he is at this time of the year!

Thank you to all the staff who work tirelessly, every day, to support all the children across the school. Their unwavering commitment and desire shines through in all that they do and we are so lucky to have such a talented and inspiring staff team supporting and teaching our children.

Finally, thank you to all the families who continue to do so much to support the school and their children. It would not be possible without you all!

We wish you all a wonderful festive break and look forward to continuing our journey together in the New Year when the Children return on Wednesday 03rd January.

Mr. Lording



AMBITION



RESPECT



PRIDE



COURAGE



LITTLE OAKS NURSERY



What a busy and exciting half term we have had at Little Oaks.

For the nursery children, the first day back was their first opportunity to have their photograph taken, by the school photographer, in the big hall. They showed fantastic confidence and some fabulous photographs, either individual or with their siblings, were taken.

We welcomed some more new children to our setting and it is lovely to see them settled and happy at Little Oaks.

Our first focus book was 'Room on the Broom'. Lots of spooky activities took place in the nursery:

- We dressed up as witches, wizards and ghosts
- Created pictures with brightly coloured paints and glitter to make a collaborative Bonfire Night display
- We explored light and dark using the stories 'Whatever Next' and 'How to Catch a Star'
- The song 'Zoom Zoom Zoom' brought about great conversations about going to the moon and space, as well as encouraging us to use number language and our fingers to count backwards from 5.

We have invested in some new resources for physical development and the bikes have been a real hit! We have also enjoyed jumping, climbing, balancing and moving our bodies during active sessions in the hall.

We were lucky to be invited to join the Reception children to watch a puppet show. We met Charlie the fox and other woodland animals. The children had great fun!

'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' led to lots of discussion about emotions and the bear feeling lonely and wanting to be friends with the family. We created lots of different opportunities for the children to use positional language and explore different sensory materials.

Christmas came early at Little Oaks and on December 1st, two elves jumped out of a cupboard in the nursery! Much excitement followed and the children have been thoroughly engaged with looking for the elves each day and finding out what they had been getting up to during the evening. The elves have even been named – Dave and Donny!

The stories 'We're going on an Elf Chase' and 'The Story of Christmas' inspired us to decorate the nursery; the home corner became a workshop for Santa's helpers and the children had their own tree which they could decorate every day - hanging baubles on the tree helped to develop fine motor skills.

To celebrate with our families we had two stay and play mornings. Our families were invited to the nursery to come and be creative and make some Christmas crafts with their children. We then had a sing-a-long and everyone was encouraged to join in – even the home adults. The children were amazing and we were so proud of them!

We are all looking forward to an action packed spring next term. Happy Christmas to all of the Little Oaks families and the school community.

... The Little Oaks Team



A MESSAGE FROM YEAR SIX

Year 6 have worked incredibly hard this term. We are very proud of the maturity they have shown in their learning and as leaders around the school. It has been clear that they are relishing the opportunity to be role models and that they are enjoying supporting children in younger year groups. In some cases, our children have been giving up their lunchtimes to help out other children in the school, such as those who have been helping children in Key Stage One with their lunches.

Rivers Trip to Lewes - Earlier in the term, we thoroughly enjoyed our school trip to Railway Land Wildlife Trust in Lewes, where we learnt about rivers and local geography. The children were fascinated to learn about our local area while also conducting experiments on the flow of river water and on how rain water makes its way through our chalky landscape into rivers.

PACA Library Visit - We have also enjoyed visits to PACA for some bonus library sessions, where the children were introduced to various new books and the library system. Whilst at PACA, the children were able to explore how the library works and played some fun reading games.

Rock Legends and Rock Heroes - This term we have had a big focus on solidifying and speeding up our times table knowledge. A huge amount of children earned their badges recently, and some are even faster than Mr. Conboy!

The Boy In The Tower - We have thoroughly enjoyed our main reading book for this term, *The Boy In The Tower*. A story about a boy named Ade, who loves living at the top of a tower block. From his window, he feels like he can see the whole world stretching out beneath him. His mum doesn't really like looking outside - but it's going outside that she hates. She prefers to sleep all day inside their tower, where it's safe. Except it isn't for long. Strange plants start to take over and tower blocks fall down around them. It is left with Ade to try and find a way out...

Art - Because rivers flow, we have chosen Vincent van Gogh as our focus artist as his brushstrokes can show movement. We started the term looking at his paintings, life and the movement associated with him - Impressionism. We then went on to more modern impressionist artists like Jean-Michel Basquait and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

Overall, the Autumn term has been a great success with lots of progress being made, alongside having lots of fun! We would like to say thank you for your continued support at home, as well as wishing you a Merry Christmas. Let's make 2024 as much of a success as the start of year 6 has been!

... The Year 6 Team



A MESSAGE FROM YEAR FIVE



What a busy half term we have had in Year 5! The children have continued to impress us with their positive attitude to learning, applying the school values each and every day.

This half term we have continued with our class reader – Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief – which the children have said is their favourite book ever! Not only does the book truly capture their imagination, their prediction skills are inspired as Rick Riordan often leaves the chapters on a cliff-hanger. We have also looked at linked texts to build on our learning of Ancient Greece.

In maths, we have been ambitious in our learning to identify the most efficient mental and written strategies when solving addition and subtraction problems. Skills such as number bonds, doubling and times tables are key for success. This confidence in number manipulation will support the children as we move onto more formal multiplication and division methods in the spring term.

Our Big Questions in Science concentrated on the human life cycle and how our bodies change both physically and mentally as we age. The children compared gestation periods of humans to other mammals, making connections between the size and life expectancy of the animal. They were fantastic researchers!

Whilst Rowan and Elder focused on dance and basketball skills in the PE curriculum, Walnut continued with their swimming lessons locally at Wadurs pool. It has been fantastic to see the children's confidence grow in the water over the course. Miss Moore is extremely proud of them all. Rowan are up next and we are looking forward to seeing how they show their courage.

Towards the end of the term, we visited St Nicholas Church in Portslade Old Village and challenged Father David with our Big Question in RE - Is the Christmas story true? He was impressed with the questions the children asked, along with their engagement during his explanations. Did you know, in the bible, it does not state how many wise men there actually were?

Finally, linked to our whole school project 'Our City, Our World' the children thought big about how they can have a positive impact on global warming. Each child planted a bulb on the school grounds which will flower come spring, not only bee-ing helpful pollinators, but looking beautiful too. They also committed to a personal pledge to help reduce their own carbon footprint.

Next term, we will be starting our new topic: SPACE! Most excitingly, our DT and art focus will be 3D sculpture where the children will be challenged with designing their own solar system. Watch out world! The wider curriculum focus will switch from history to geography with our guided reading text 'The Story of the Blue Planet' supporting the learning.

... The Year 5 Team



A MESSAGE FROM YEAR FOUR

This has been a fantastic term in Year 4 and the children have really settled down into being responsible, grown-up learners.

We have continued our topic of The Tudors and taken it further by learning about explorers and other important Tudor figures. This has included Jacques Frances, the black diver and the renowned playwright, William Shakespeare!



We began the term by cooking a Tudor Feast. We learned all about the Tudor diet and found that for the rich people it was not very healthy as it contained lots of meat and few vegetables. This inspired us to design a menu to help Henry VIII lose weight. We prepared two Tudor pottage stews, one with pearl barley and one with split peas. For pudding, we made baked apples, which were flavoured with sultanas, cinnamon, dates and honey.

The children thoroughly enjoyed learning to chop, peel and mix this food to create the feast. They then got to taste it all and most children were brave enough to try all of it! Finally, we wrote an evaluation of the whole experience.



Back in October, we also enjoyed visiting the Forest School area on a few occasions to inspire our creative writing.

The children engaged really well with Anti-bullying week and showed a good understanding of this year's theme, Make a Noise About Bullying. There were some enlightening classroom discussions and children thought about what we could do in different scenarios. The children certainly looked odd when they dressed up to mark the week on the Friday!



We have been reading the book 'My other life' which explores an alternative life through a mysterious portal. The children were hooked in reading sessions and it got them thinking about their own portal ideas. Inspired by this, they planned out their very own portal story! The children thought carefully about how to make their story exciting and descriptive.



They brainstormed rich, powerful vocabulary and used a story mountain plan to map out the different parts of their story. The children were really focused and engaged when they wrote their stories - they loved feeling like an author! We were really impressed with the stories they produced and we enjoyed reading them.

One frosty morning this term, the children came to class and were greeted by ice hands on their tables! After feeling a little baffled, the children started to observe the ice hands closely and thought about what might happen to them during the day. The children made sensible predictions and were introduced to scientific vocabulary to support their predictions. Every two hours, we checked the ice hands by weighing them and measuring their temperature. We recorded our findings and analysed them over the day.

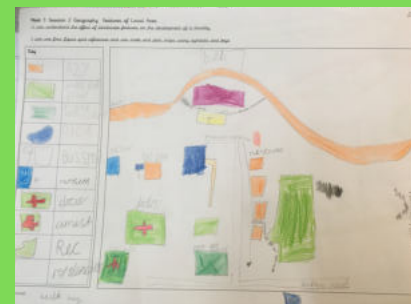


By home time, our ice hands had all melted and there was nothing but a puddle of water left in the trays! This investigation became our starting point for learning about solids, liquids and gases. We explored how they are similar and different. Perhaps your children could find examples of solids, liquids and gases in their home?

This term, the whole school has launched the Our City, Our World project. In Year 4, we have explored what climate change is by looking at the impact on humans and the impact on wildlife. Children have clearly demonstrated their strong feelings about this subject and have created some persuasive messages. We always look at what we can do to make a difference so, like all the other children in the school, we have all planted a daffodil bulb to show our hopes for the future.

... The Year 4 Team

A MESSAGE FROM YEAR THREE



Wow! This term has flown! Our topic of 'Bright Lights' has developed our understanding of sources of light, reflective surfaces and shadows in Science. We have really enjoyed exploring the power of light, using our mini 'dark boxes' in class.

In Religious Education we are asking the BIG question 'Has Christmas lost its true meaning for Christians'. This led to lots of discussion about what Christmas means for each of us, and how our meanings and values can be different, but still very special. Father David was very impressed with the questions and interest that the children showed at our recent visit to the Church of the Good Shepherd. The children have a very good understanding of how Christmas is important to Christians.

In Geography we have been practising our mapping skills. We have sketched the local area, including important features in our locality. We have discussed influence and tourism, and how local features can bring tourists into the area. The children have also practised interpreting four figure grid references, and using these to locate features on maps.

In Maths, we have consolidated our understanding of place value, adding and subtracting hundreds, tens and ones. The children continue to practise times tables, with regular times on iPads in class to attempt the Times Tables Rock Star challenges.

The children have enjoyed our PSHE topics. We have looked at Our City, Our World as part of Global citizenship. We discussed what climate change is, how we feel about it and we were all able to plant our own bulbs to kick start the project. We look forward to seeing how we can change our world for the better as the daffodils emerge in Spring next year.

In Music, the children have been practising their singing and performance skills. Each class have also learnt a poem. We are pairing up with year 4 and hope to see you at our Christmas performances.

As part of our writing this term we have been looking at the features of letter writing, in particular letters of persuasion. We successfully wrote letters to persuade Mr Lording to ask adults to put on more lunchtime and after school clubs. We have also worked hard to improve our handwriting, making sure that we have cursive joins.

The book that we have been enjoying this term is about the plight of dolphins and wildlife in our oceans and the effects that rubbish can have on them. 'The Song of the Dolphin Boy' has elicited lots of discussion and deep thinking. We have enjoyed this book based on Scottish folk law.

In Design and Technology, the children are putting the finishing touches to their sewing this week, and are looking forward to taking their efforts home to share! They have decorated and made felt trees, using overstitching and running stitches to fasten and secure the different materials. What has been most impressive is their willingness to share their skills with their friends! Well done, year 3!

... The Year 3 Team

A MESSAGE FROM YEAR TWO



Another fantastic half term in Year 2! Robin and Wren classes have loved immersing ourselves into our 'Once Upon a Time' topic and exploring different versions of traditional tales.

In English, we have produced lots of amazing pieces of writing! We started off by comparing Ghana to the U.K and linked this to our Geography learning. We created some amazing leaflets all about Ghana and learned a lot about the food and culture. We also spent a lot of time reading and re-telling the story of 'Prince Cinders'. We enjoyed writing character descriptions which gave us the skills we needed to add lots of descriptions to our stories. The adults were so impressed with the amazing vocabulary the children came up with! Finally, we made Christmas cards and wrote instructions on how to make them, using adverbs and imperative verbs.

Other books we have enjoyed this half term were 'Little Red' and 'The Tunnel'. The children loved reading them and discussing links to other traditional tales.

In Maths, we have been working hard to learn how to solve addition and subtraction calculations using two digits. We can do this successfully either by partitioning the numbers or using resources to help us. We have also loved consolidating our number skills using numbots. We would love for the children to continue doing this over the holidays.

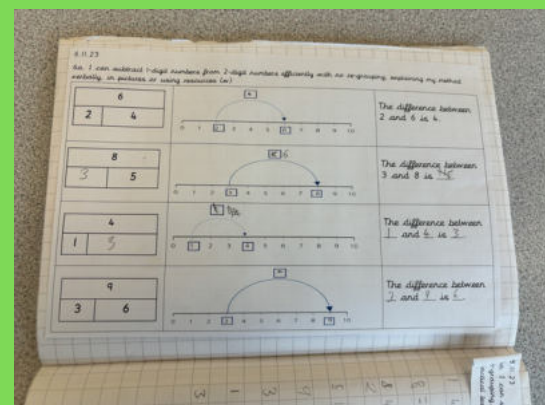
For our Religious Education learning, we started by consolidating last half term's learning with a visit to the Church of the Good Shepherd to discuss our previous big question of 'Is it possible to be kind to everyone all the time?' We loved looking around the building and discussing key features of the nativity story too. We cannot wait to visit another religious building after Christmas when we go to the mosque!

Our City, Our World has been an important part of our PSHE topic this half term. We have written our hopes for the future and also planted some bulbs outside our classrooms which we will hopefully see in spring! We will look at this again later in the year when we learn about 'The Great Outdoors'.

Right at the start of this half term, we created some amazing self-portraits. We started by sketching ourselves very carefully one step at a time, then mixed our skin tones using primary colours. We also created a background for our portraits by drawing pictures that represent us. Some of these portraits even made it on display outside our classrooms and have been the talk of the school – Mr Lording was so impressed!

Finally, we rounded off an amazing half term with a brilliant Christmas performance. We have been practising these songs in our music lessons and in assemblies for weeks and everyone was so proud when it all came together. We also loved learning our 'Remember the Reindeer' poem and our dance.

Well done for a fantastic half term Year 2! We hope everyone has an amazing, well-earned rest over the Christmas holidays and look forward to more amazing learning in 2024.



... The Year 2 Team

A MESSAGE FROM YEAR ONE

What a busy end to 2023, Starling and Goldfinch class have had! The children have continued to impress us with how they have settled so quickly into the Year 1 expectations and routine.

This term we have enjoyed getting stuck into our topic 'Traditional tales'. In guided reading we have been reading the texts 'The Deep Dark Woods' and 'The Christmas Alphabet'. We have been learning about the VIPERS reading skills and applying these to the texts. We are going to be performing 'The Christmas Alphabet' at the Christmas Show – we can't wait for you to hear it!



To consolidate the learning of our 'Traditional Tales' topic we had a visit from The Rainbow Theatre company. We were so lucky to have four of the Traditional Tales acted out for us – some of us even performed in the show. Aswell as The Rainbow Theatre coming to visit we also had some of the characters from the traditional tales come to visit and read us a story! Some of the characters did look a little bit like some of our teachers though!

This half term we have continued working on our Year 1 "writing rules" within English. We can all tell you what a good sentence needs and we put this in to practise when writing a recount of The Rainbow Theatre visit and when writing a set of Instructions for how to make a Christmas Card with a slider.

In History, we have been learning all about the past and the present. First the children looked at their own lives and how they have changed from a baby, to a toddler, to a child. We then looked at the changes from the past to present at our school by looking at old school photographs; did you know that Mile Oak School used to have a swimming pool? Finally we looked at the changes in the Mile Oak area from the past to now. We even had a guess at what Mile Oak will look like in the future!



In Maths we have been practising our counting and subitising skills as well as learning what parts form a whole. Perhaps your child could tell you what two parts make the number 5 using our stem sentence: ___ is a part, ___ is a part, 5 is the whole. We have also been working really hard on our numeral formation! The children have been learning rhymes to help them remember how to form each numeral. Here is the song if they would like to practise at home!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzKqCmjVXLI>



We have also enjoyed our PSHE topics this half term! We have been learning all about children who are part of the Gypsy, Roma Traveler Community and how our lives are both similar and different to theirs. We have also looked at Our City, Our World as part of Global citizenship. We discussed what climate change is, how we feel about it and we were all able to plant our own bulb to kick start the project. Finally we took part in Anti-bullying week where we were proud to wear odd clothes to celebrate our differences!

A final highlight of the half term was the Christmas Show! The Year 1 children paired up with the Year 2 children to sing songs and perform actions to some well-known Christmas songs. We also really enjoyed learning Makaton actions and the words to "The Christmas Alphabet" poem. We hope you all have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday! We look forward to lots more fun learning experiences in 2024!

... The Year 1 Team

A MESSAGE FROM RECEPTION



Our term started with a bang as the local fire service visited us to tell us about all the hard work they do to keep us safe. We heard about all their equipment and even tried on their helmets. This helped us link our learning to experiences of fireworks being part of cultural events such as Halloween and Bonfire Night, and to Diwali; the Hindu and Sikh festival of light, and how it is important to stay safe during these times. We have thoroughly enjoyed being firefighters in our outdoor area, using the bikes as fire engines, putting out fires with 'hoses' and problem solving together as a team to rescue a cat from the tree.

We also all had the opportunity to have some balance bike training from Bikeability. The children have really progressed in their balancing, gliding and braking skills. Many of us are ready to progress onto pedal bikes. We will be adding pedal bikes to our daily provision very soon.

Another theme we have explored was how the seasons are changing and the nights are drawing in. We talk about the weather daily and love noticing how it changes through each day and each week. We have been 'camping' in our role play areas and visited the Forest School area finding out the answer to our big science question 'Why do leaves crunch?'



The family event was such fun and gave us a chance to share our forest school skills with our grown-ups. We have been bird watching with our binoculars in our outdoor learning area too and investigating ice on these frosty mornings. Our writing skills have been developing by keeping notes and lists on all we have explored.



Recently we had a very special visitor in school, Henry the hedgehog. He dropped by with his owner, Graham, to support our learning about woodland animals and we learnt the meaning of the word 'nocturnal'. We also were very fortunate to meet Charlie the fox during a brilliant puppet show. He also taught us lots about woodland animals and we got to be puppeteers too as we made our own sock puppets. We then put on little shows of our own. Charlie thought they were great, and so did the teachers!

As if that wasn't enough fun for one term, we have used the fantastic story of The Gingerbread Man to develop our story sequencing and comprehension skills. We were visited by the little old woman whose gingerbread boy ran away. Fortunately, the Bumblebee Bakery opened its doors again and we were able to make her a new one. We also got to make some for ourselves too, and they were yummy!



A MESSAGE FROM RECEPTION



Our term is concluding with the eagerly anticipated Christmas show. The children have worked so hard to learn and perform a range of songs. We can't wait to perform it for you. We hope you love it as much as we have getting it all ready. We went to Paddock Court to spread some festive cheer by singing our songs to them. The best time was had by old and young alike! We have also continued our learning by visiting The Church of The Good Shepherd where Father David told us all about The First Christmas.

Our next topic is sure to be another fun-filled escapade as we 'enter stage left' into the footlights with our topic 'That's Show Business!' We will be experiencing and immersing ourselves into the world of performing arts including dance, magic, singing and circus skills. We will think about colour and shape, and develop our self-confidence as we learn to perform to each other and other classes.

The very popular Mile Oak Talent Show will take place, and the older children will show us their skills. For any willing grown-up performers amongst you, this is your chance to show us your skills!

All of this learning will be backed up by some fantastic stories such as Circus Girl, Wolf Won't Bite, The Three Little Pigs and the Colour Monster.

Thank you for your continued support with phonics and reading at home. We are always keen to hear how your child is doing at home. Please share by commenting in the reading journal. We also love to see activities from home, including developing writing, and the children love sharing their Learning Journal updates so please take some time to add a few pieces if you are able to.

Best wishes for a restful holiday.

... The Reception Team



READING UPDATE



We're bringing you the latest news on the magical world of Reading! **READING EVERY DAY...CREATES** lifelong readers. **TEACHES** children to find adventure, answers, and ideas through books. **STRENGTHENS** relationships and creates memories as a family activity. **OPENS DOORS** through which children can learn about themselves. **AWAKENS** children to the world around them. **ALLOWS** a child's imagination to blossom. **GIVES** children the tools to be a successful writer. **HELPS** children make connections. **BUILDS** a diverse vocabulary. **OFFERS** comfort and escape during times of trouble. At Mile Oak we read every day to enable children to have the ability to engage with a variety of genre. Sometimes, the reading buddies will share a book with a partner, at other times we may read some non-fiction to support our topic and then we could be reading together fluently as a class. The ways we immerse ourselves into the world of books at Mile Oak is endless. In Reception the children have been retelling traditional tales, had a visit from 'The Old Woman' character and even baked ginger bread! Year 1 then explored a broader range of traditional tales and had their stories read to them by one of the three pigs, a bear and Little Red herself. Year 2 further developed their understanding of traditional tales by comparing them to more modern versions. The children thought 'Prince Cinders' was hilarious (which it is!). Year 3 have been reading Dolphin Boy this term which raises the issue of how important recycling is. This links beautifully to our new project 'Our School, Our City, Our World.' Learning through books is a wonderful way for children to broaden their understanding of a complex issue. Year 4 have continued using nature as a source of inspiration with their reading as they used our beautiful forest environment to help imagine the setting of their class text; 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Year 5 have delved into the ancient past with Percy Jackson who has helped us learn so much about the Ancient Greek Gods, Goddesses and mythical creatures. Finally, Year 6 have read 'Boy in the tower' which has given the pupils plenty of opportunity to explore poetry. We once again hosted our wonderful book swap which was filled to the brim with book donations. Thank you to everyone who brings books in to be recycled and loved by a new reader. The term concluded with our Reading Star draw which is an opportunity to celebrate our wonderful reading star winners and for them to have a chance of winning a book voucher from 'The Book Nook'.

... Mrs Hills



PE UPDATE



This half-term has been incredibly successful for Mile Oak in sport and PE. We have attended the annual cross-country meet at Waterhall, which had been deluged in the week leading up to it so it made it incredibly difficult to take part in! At the event, the children represented the school fantastically well and it is the best that the school has ever scored at the event. A special mention has to go to Jack T-J and George.B, who finished 28th and 59th in the Y5 race.

Also, Amelia.H and Adara.P, who finished 60th and 70th in the Y6 girls race. Last but not least, Edward.L, Blake.S and Jake.S, who finished 6th, 51st and 96th in the Y6 boys' race respectively. The children showed great courage to finish the race under the conditions and out of so many children (about 200 in each race).

Excitingly, we have also welcomed some PACA sports captains to our school this term. They have been supporting our children this half term to develop their leadership skills by helping classes with their cycling sessions on a Tuesday and a Thursday. This has been imperative in helping towards ensuring our aim of having all of our children being able to cycle before they leave us and these sports captains will be a huge part of this. Cycling remains an important part of our school sports offering and will continue to be for years to come.

This term, the school football team has made great strides towards achieving a trophy this year. We have finished 3rd in the Brighton school's tournament, as well as winning a smaller local tournament and qualifying for a city-wide tournament, where the boys tried their hardest but came up against some very good teams and therefore did not prevail. In the league, the boys have topped their group and are now through to the knockout stages, beating Hangleton 5-1 in their final game, where Ethan.A grabbed a whopping 4 goals and Ronnell.J added another goal. There will be the knockout stages after Christmas and friendly games for those children who have not yet played a game.

Thank you for all of your support in 2023 and we look forward to providing the children with more sporting opportunities in a very exciting-looking 2024.



... Mr McCusker and Mr Crellin



ART UPDATE



**Artsmark
Silver Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England

We are still very excited about achieving the Arts Mark silver Award at the end of last year and will now endeavor to achieve the Gold standard.

The silver award was about the school starting their journey in spreading the knowledge of art and inspiring young people to feel like an artist and that in the future, being an artist is a tangible career choice. We are now aiming to solidify our practice in conveying artists and styles so that we can make further strides in becoming a well-established creative school that strives for excellence and innovation; that is exciting and inspiring, and provides the children with a sense of ownership and belonging.

Some of our future plans are to create an art gallery that will display and celebrate all types of art across the school, whether it be achieved in class or at home. We will also research a range of art competitions both locally and nationally that children can enter. A long-term plan is to create a sculpture garden that shows off our dedication to the arts and our commitment to actively involving our wonderfully diverse pupils.

Bonfire Art Competition

We won! Frankie and Melissa collaborated and created an amazing installation of fireworks and a bonfire.



Many thanks to all those that worked on their pieces of art at home and handed it in: all the entries are wonderful and capture the essence of Bonfire Night. Here are a few of our fantastic entries:

Shaun is Back

Please come and say hello! As you can see Sheldon is taking care of him and showing him the ropes.



Children's Parade 2024 - Dreams

Finally, it is that time of year when we start our Children's Parade journey so please ask your children if they would like to be involved in next year's event. Can we ask that you only sign your child up if they want to do it, as we need children to be engaged and excited? There are limited spaces so Year 6 will get priority as this is their last year and we will also check it against last year's list so that those who did not attend last will attend this year.



... Miss Witts

WRITING UPDATE



Reception - What an achievement for all our youngest learners! Our first piece of published, writing. We are all so very proud of the children for the huge amounts of writing progress they have made, in their first term of school.

Through our learning journey this half term, we have explored nature, been to forest school, and learnt about woodland animals and light and dark. We know about nocturnal animals and animals that like to hibernate; topping off our learning with a puppet show and some very prickly visitors!

The hands on experience of meeting the hedgehogs, lots of oral rehearsal and practising segmenting and writing CVC words, supported us to become expert writers. In our last week of term, we will be putting our writing skills to work again, creating posters for our cinema experience, writing ever hopeful Christmas lists and writing about our Christmas show.

The **Year 1's** have been busy writing instructions on how to make a slider Christmas card. First they had a go at reading a set of instructions and putting the steps into the right order. Then, they had a go at following the instructions to make their own amazing cards! After that, they prepared their instructions by practising writing the key nouns (character, glue, and card) and verbs (stick, cut and colour) that they would need. Finally they wrote up their own set of instructions with a title, equipment list and all the steps. We hope you can use their instructions to make your own Slider Christmas card!

Year 2 have worked so hard on their Prince Cinders writing. We started by immersing ourselves into the story through drama. We then spent some time learning key skills that make a good story re-telling including conjunctions, spelling and expanded noun phrases. We then re-told the beginning and build-up with the support of adults and then independently wrote and published the problem.

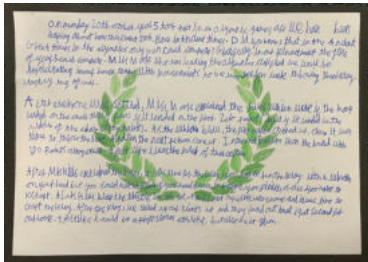
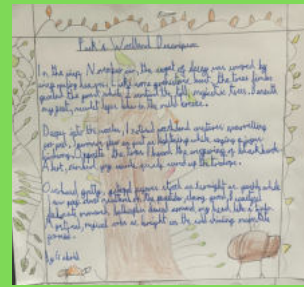
Year 3 have been developing our skills to write persuasive letters to Mr Lording. We have used techniques such as alliteration and exaggeration to persuade Mr Lording to ask adults to put on more clubs in school. We can see that our writing is improving every time we write and we often compare with how we wrote at the beginning of the year. In particular, we are developing our skills to plan our writing collaboratively, using planning templates and working as a group to draw on everyone's ideas. These plans are then amalgamated to support our writing and helping us to develop a more rounded piece of finished work.

Year 4 have been reading A Midsummer's Night Dream, this term. We really enjoyed the magic and mystery that took place in the forest. This inspired us to write a descriptive scene of our own magical woodland with fairies, elves and orbs. Firstly, we went to the forest with our notebooks and pencils for a spot of forest bathing. If we sat silently, we could hear lots of different sounds. We then described how the forest made us feel and we went on a vocabulary hunt through the trees.

WRITING UPDATE



This session introduced us to lots of new language and ideas for our description. **Year 4** used all these ideas to plan our writing. Our main focus was to use lots of adjectives, expanded noun phrases and fronted adverbials, which we rehearsed lots before completing our final piece. Year four have become very good at reviewing their writing and making changes to make it better. I am sure you will agree that the final pieces are exceptional.



Our **Year 5** history topic, Ancient Greek, acted as the stimuli for this term's writing genres. First, we carefully researched the 'Big Three' Greek gods: Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. These newfound facts provided the knowledge we needed to write an informative non-chronological report. Did you know Athena, Zeus' favourite daughter, was able to use his powerful master-bolt?

Or that Poseidon had a palace on the ocean floor made of gems and coral? The children learnt about the importance of using a range of pronouns in their writing to improve cohesion, as well as enhancing their vocabulary by including words linked to the period of history. More recently, the children took part in an Ancient Greek Olympics sport day. Walnut, Elder and Rowan competed in a variety of events including discus, relay and tug of war. They battled hard for house points and the esteemed title of 'Olympic Champions'. This experience was used as the stimulus for their second genre of writing: recount. We focused on a range of sentence structures to add variety, including our newly learnt relative clause. The children published their writing onto Olympic symbols which look fantastic. Finally, we used our practised recount skills to write about our school trip to St Nicholas Church in Old Portslade Village. The children really focused on using subordination both ways confidently, in addition to fronted adverbials of time and place.

Year 6 - In reading we are reading Boy in the Tower which has inspired us to write a newspaper report due to the dramatic events that unfold in the story. Firstly, we learn the features of a newspaper by analyzing an example text and then use those features to write our own with the support of our teacher. Our class newspaper reports are about a highly destructive flood that tore through the village of Boscastle in north Cornwall. Because newspapers need to be dramatic, we dug deep to find many ways to convey the awful scenes that unfolded that day. Once it was finished, we published them on the laptops using our word processing skills.





Our next writing unit involved writing an information text about a river of our choice. To do this, we have developed our research skills: not only have we used the internet to safely search for information but we also used atlases to find out where the river begins and ends, and Google Earth to see the physical features, like: meanders, waterfalls, gorges and rapids, through satellite images. We have really enjoyed using dramatic words and phrases and cannot wait to write our own version in our independent writing books.


... Ms Wilks

CORNISH FLOOD	
<p>Yesterday, in Cornwall, a calm village was destroyed as a flash flood tore through the streets. People desperately attempted to get themselves and their families away from the disaster.</p>	 <p>An A&E helicopter completing rescue</p>
<p>At approximately 4pm, the terrified residents of Boscastle were shocked by an unexpected torrent of water tearing through the usual pedestrian village. Reports say that the river suddenly burst its banks due to a combination of extremely heavy rainfall and an unusually high tide. Homes reported that cars were being swept away into the sea channel. The residents exclaimed, "I just saw my car float away" and they later commented by saying, "The water was as in as it was bounded up." A husband and wife from Captain Havelock said they had to be airlifted because they got stuck on a church roof.</p>	 <p>Thankfully, no-one was seriously hurt or killed. Unfortunately, you can't say the same about the village. Reports are set up to £15,000,000. Business owners are left with unimaginable costs to rectify the buildings.</p>
<p>Approximately one hour later, the Royal Air Force was called to rescue the residents of Boscastle who were trapped in their homes and even in trees. Some of the Boscastle residents were picked up safely by the skilled team and crew. Captain Havelock did so that two inches of rain fell in just two hours, causing the disaster events.</p>	<p>Reporter: Florence</p>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION







Spring 1 Religious festival calendar

January			
	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh	Sikh 	This is a celebration of the birth anniversary of the Guru Gobind Singh. On this day, historical lectures are conducted and poems are told in praise of the Guru. Special dishes are prepared and served during the festivities. Like other anniversaries associated with the lives of the Gurus, the day is referred to as a gurburb, and is marked by the ending of an akhand path, an unbroken reading of the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib. This lasts for 48 hours
6th January	Epiphany	Christian 	This is the 'twelfth day of Christmas', which, according to Christian belief was when the three kings visited the infant Jesus in Bethlehem, bearing symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; and when John the Baptist baptised Jesus in the River Jordan. Epiphany is the day when some say that all Christmas decorations should be taken down, since otherwise bad luck will follow.
14 th /15th January	Makar Sankranti	Hindu 	Sankranti is the start of a new zodiac sign. This is the date based on the solar rather than the lunar calendar. For many Hindus it is a day for giving and patching up quarrels and disagreements. Fires are lit outside and peanuts and sesame sweets are eaten round them. The traditional Punjabi meal consists of cornmeal chapatis and a mustard leaf dish.
21st January	World Religion Day	All Faiths	This day promotes interfaith understanding by emphasising factors common to all faiths. 

February			
8 th February	Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj (The Night Journey & Ascension)	Muslim 	This marks the night journey of the Prophet Muhammad through the heavens to the presence of God. It is when the command that Muslims should pray five times a day was given to the Prophet. The rock from which the Prophet ascended is now in Jerusalem's 'Dome of the Rock'. Muslims mark this night by reading the <i>Qur'an</i> and saying additional prayers.
10 th February	Lunar New Year		New Year's Day is the most important event in the traditional Chinese calendar and marks the beginning of the first lunar month. The festival is colourfully celebrated with fireworks, dances (such as the famous Lion Dance) and the giving of gifts, flowers and sweets. 20__ is the year of the ____

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Spring 1 Religious festival calendar

13 th February	Shrove Tuesday	Christian 	This festival is often called 'Pancake Day', as pancakes use up all the rich foods before Lent. The name comes from the old word 'shriving', which means to listen to someone's sins and forgive them. In Anglo-Saxon England, Christians would go to church on Shrove Tuesday to confess their sins and clean their soul. In other words, they would be 'shriven'.
14 th February	Sarasvati Puja	Hindu 	Widely celebrated in North India, this festival marks the beginning of spring. For Hindus it is usually linked with Saraswati, the goddess of learning and the arts. Yellow is her associated colour.
15 th February	Par nirvana	Buddhist 	This is a festival that marks the death of the Buddha. It is also known as Nirvana Day. Buddhists celebrate the death of the Buddha, because they believe that having attained Enlightenment he achieved freedom from physical existence and its sufferings.
22 nd February	Ash Wednesday	Christian 	This first day of Lent recalls the temptations Jesus faced for forty days in the wilderness.
22 nd February - 6 th April	Lent	Christian 	This is a period of forty days of fasting and self-discipline that leads up to Easter. Traditionally, Christians give up something during this time to mark the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. Many Christians feel it is a time for study groups, prayer and Bible reading.
24 th February	Chinese Lantern Festival		The Lantern Festival marks the first full moon of the year and the lengthening of the days. Strings of lanterns in various designs are hung up indoors and outside as decoration.
24 th February	Magha Puja	Buddhist 	This is a celebration in honour of the Buddhist community. It remembers when Buddha taught the main principles of the Dharma and set out his teachings. The day is observed with meditation, chanting and the reaffirmation of people's commitment to Buddhist practice.

BEHAVIOUR

How we help children to talk about and regulate their emotions.

ZONES of Regulation:

What is self-regulation?

The ability to focus your attention, control your emotions and manage your thinking, behaviour and feelings.

We teach the children ways to help them to identify how they are feeling using the different coloured ZONES



REST AREA

HOW DO I FEEL?

Can you think of a time you felt any of these emotions?
Can you think of any other emotions that may be in the blue zone?

Blue zone feelings

Bored
Sleepy
Tearful
Sick
Lonely
Tired

GO

How do I feel?

Happy
Ready for learning

Green Zone feelings

Calm
Focussed
Proud

SLOW

HOW DO I FEEL?

Can you think of a time you felt any of these emotions?
Can you think of any other emotions that maybe in the yellow zone?

Yellow zone feelings

Embarrassed
Nervous
Excited
Jealous
Confused

STOP

HOW DO I FEEL?

Can you think of a time you felt any of these emotions?
Can you think of any other emotions that maybe in the red zone?

Red zone feelings

Angry
Terrified
Out of control
Elated
Aggressive

We will experience all the zones as some point.

All zones are okay!

All feelings are okay!

REST AREA

GO

SLOW

STOP

ANTI-RACISM UPDATE

We have always been a school that is against racism but over the last few years we have been on an ongoing journey to be an actively anti-racist school. During our September INSET day all staff received unconscious bias training delivered by John Lynch and Beth Thomas-Handcock from RISE training group. During this training we also completed a planning session to celebrate what we are doing well, identify what we need to stop doing and to make plans moving forward for both the short term and the long term. Plans will soon be shared with our families on our dedicated anti-racism website page.

As a result of our planning we have now introduced 'greeting of the week' where children are encouraged in celebration assembly to share their second language (or super power as we refer to it) by saying good afternoon to everybody. Children and staff then repeat this phrase and posters are displayed in school with the greeting. Children who do not speak a second language are encouraged to research at home to learn a phrase to share.

In the new year there are plans to create some pupil voice groups. One group will be a safe space for pupils of colour in years 5 and 6 to share their experiences and feelings of representation in school and another that will be open to all children who have a passion for creating change. We have hopes to also link with similar pupil groups in other schools. Further information will be sent home in the new year.

We would like to say a massive thank you to [Open Minds Project](#), a local registered charity, who kindly donated a box of beautifully illustrated books to Little Oaks Nursery. The donation includes story books which will support our school's practice of being a diverse representative school. You are not obliged to make a donation but if you want to or would like to share the information about their fundraiser, the details are [here](#)



ANTI-RACISM UPDATE



We have formally recognised, by adopting The Halo Code that we embrace all Afro-hairstyles.

This means that -

- Our school champions the right of staff and students to embrace all Afro-hairstyles. We acknowledge that Afro-textured hair is an important part of our Black staff and students' racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious identities, and requires specific styling for hair health and maintenance.

- We welcome Afro-textured hair worn in all styles including, but not limited to, afros, locs, twists, braids, cornrows, fades, hair straightened through the application of heat or chemicals, weaves, wigs, headscarves, and wraps.

- At this school, we recognise and celebrate our staff and students' identities.

- We are a community built on an ethos of equality and respect where hair texture and style have no bearing on anyone's ability to succeed.

New display boards have been created to celebrate our global majority heroes and also to educate children on microaggressions, which are subtle acts of racism that cause increasing harm over time, such as hair touching or asking a person of colour where they are from.



It's really important that parents have discussions with their children about race and racism from an early age, especially if they are racialised as white.

Information and support can be found in a variety of places. We will share some examples with each newsletter. <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>

Dr Seuss' The Sneetches is also a great way to start a conversation. The video is [here](#)

NEXT HALF TERM

Topics for Spring 1

Reception - That's Showbusiness

Year 1 - Toys

Year 2 - Ice, Ice Baby!

Year 3 - Where do we live?

Year 4 - Romans?

Year 5 - Space

Year 6 - Battle of Britain

Please visit the school website and select your child's year group to view the curriculum overview for their year:

www.mileoakschool.co.uk/year-groups.

This details what children will be learning in each subject.

In addition to which topics children will cover, the curriculum maps show the key skills which will be taught.

Core Reading Texts for Autumn 2

Reception Life is Magic: Meg McLaren, Wolf Won't Bite: Emily Gravett and Flyaway Katie: Polly Dunbar

Year 1: Nothing: Mick Inkpen and Something Else: Kathryn Cave

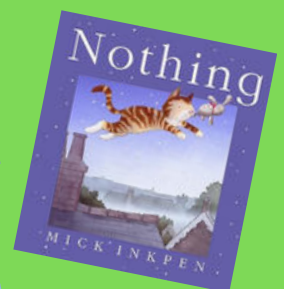
Year 2: The Snow Dragon: Vivian French and Winter's Child: Angela McAllister

Year 3: Tilly and the Time Machine: Ade Edmondson

Year 4: Roman Diary: The Journal of Iliona and Young Slave: Richard Platt

Year 5: The Story of the Blue Planet: Andri Magnussen

Year 6: When the Sky Falls: Phil Earle



January



Tues 02.01.24 INSET Day

Wed 03.01.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

Mon 08.01.24 to Fri 19.01.24 Year 2, 3 & 4 Learn to Ride

Mon 08.01.24 Reception Topic Share 15:30pm

Tues 09.01.24 Reception Magic Show

Wed 10.01.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

Wed 10.01.24 Year 3 Topic Share 15:30pm

Thurs 11.01.24 Year 3 Local History Walk

Fri 12.01.24 Year 1 visit Hove Toy Museum

Fri 12.01.24 Year 2 Topic Share 15:30pm

Mon 15.01.24 Year 4 Topic Share 15:30pm

Tues 16.01.24 Year 4 - Ash Class visit PACA Library

Wed 17.01.24 Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Circus Skills

Wed 17.01.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

Wed 17.01.24 Year 5 Topic Share 15:30pm

Fri 19.01.24 Year 1 Topic Share 15:30pm

Fri 19.01.24 Year 6 Topic Share 15:30pm

Wed 24.01.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

Tues 30.01.24 Year 2 - Robin Class visit Al Medinah

Tues 30.01.24 Year 1 - Starling Class Big Make

Wed 31.01.24 Year 1 - Goldfinch Class Big Make

Wed 31.01.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

February

Mon 05.02.24 to **Fri 09.02.24** Children's Mental Health Week

Mon 05.02.24 Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Dragon Dancing Workshop

Mon 05.02.24 Year 4 visit Fishbourne Roman Palace

Tues 06.02.24 Year 2 - Wren Class visit Al Medinah

Wed 07.02.24 Year 5 Swimming - Rowan Class

Fri 09.02.24 Last Day of Term



MILE OAK SAFEGUARDING TEAM



Mile Oak Primary School

"THINK BIG"

Safeguarding Team



*Mr Lording
Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead
Teacher for Children in Care
and previously in Care*



*Mrs Larter
Family Champion
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead*



*Ms Wilks
Assistant Headteacher
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead*



*Mrs Foster
Learning Mentor*



*Rosalind Turner
Chair of Governors
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding
Teacher for Children in Care and
previously in care*

In the unlikely event that none of the safeguarding team are available, please contact:

Front Doors for Families

Telephone: 01273 290400 (9am-5pm, Monday to Thursday and 9am-4.30pm, Fridays).

Emergency Duty Service (outside working hours): 01273 335 905 or 01273 335 906

Email: FrontDoorforFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk

COMMUNICATION

We have received excellent feedback regarding our new communication protocol for staff and parents. All communication is logged by the admin team and tracked for a response.

Whilst it can sometimes feel simpler to grab a teacher at the end of the day, this means staff are not able to supervise children who they are releasing to parents. Before school, it is vital that teachers can fully prepare for the day ahead and many of them run early morning interventions. In addition, our wonderful admin team track communication which means it does not get lost in a busy email inbox or become a forgotten question at the end of the school day.

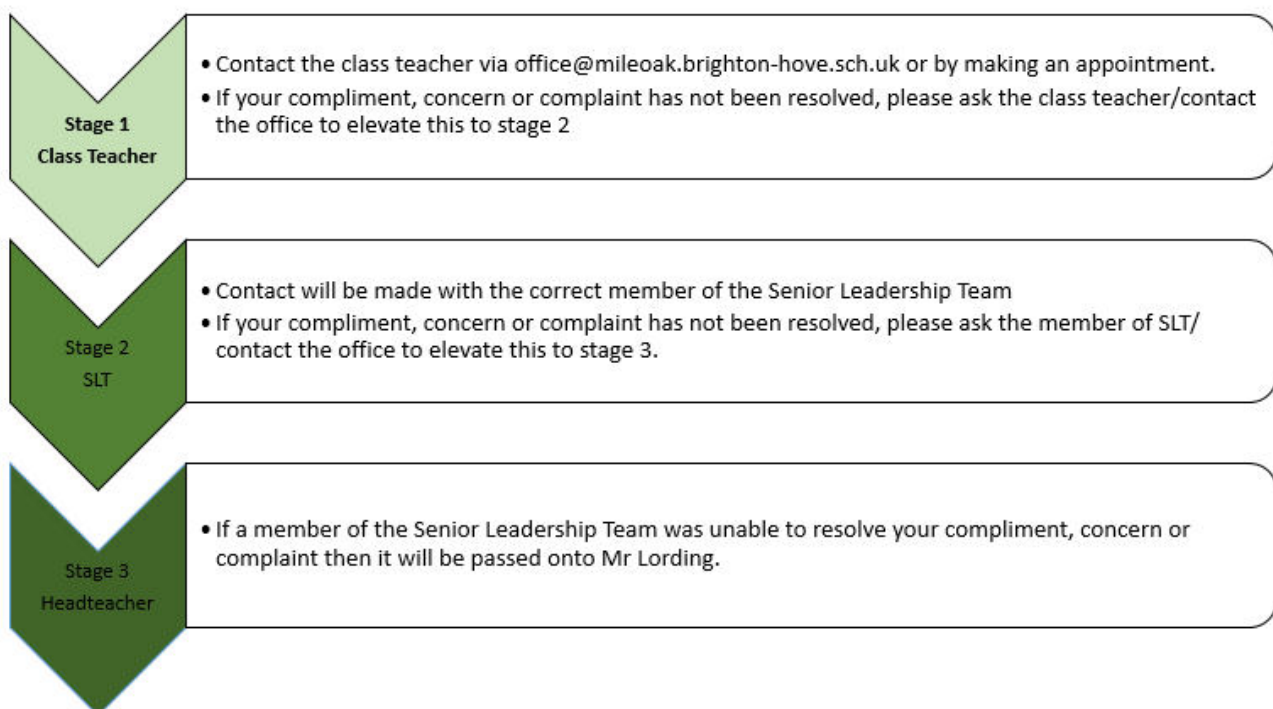
Once initial communication has been made, staff will respond within 2 working days. If a face-to-face meeting is required, the relevant member of staff will make an appointment for a mutually convenient time.

The Admin team are very happy to take calls, emails or even messages in the postbox out side of the reception area and will ensure your query, concern or compliment is passed on to the correct members of staff.

For further information on our communication protocol, please visit our website.

Communications Protocol

To ensure swift responses, equitable access and careful tracking of communication, we have asked the administration team to adhere to the following communication protocol. All communication will be directed to the correct stage.



Mile Oak Primary School, Graham Avenue,
Portslade, BN41 2WN



01273 077114



office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk



<http://www.mileoakschool.co.uk>