



*"I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)*

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Shining Brightly:

It is so lovely to be back, thank you ever so much for your thoughts and wishes it has been amazing to see the children again- I have really missed them! A huge thank you to Mr. Hockaday and my brilliant staff team for keeping the school running in my absence- I have the very best team! The sun has been shining a little more and with Spring comes lots of new growth and opportunities and this is what we have been seeing in school as your children have been learning and growing. This newsletter contains some recent highlights of shining moments from each of the classes for you to enjoy.



### Class R

We have had another jam-packed term full of learning through play. We have continued our learning about traditional tales through a Talk 4 Writing approach. The children learnt to retell the story of The Three Little Pigs, creating their own story maps and even making their own house out of different materials. We had great fun testing how strong they were with our very own Big Bad Wolf (aka Mrs Crowley's hair dryer!)



Gaining an insight into the past by learning about castles has been so much fun. We have created our own castles, learnt about life in castles and enjoyed playing with and constructing castle role play. We then delved even further into the past and entered the Jurassic period where we immersed ourselves in all things dinosaurs!



For World Book Day we loved dressing up as book characters and

sharing our favourite stories.

And of course, we have been continuing to make great progress in learning to read and write. One way we do this is through our daily phonics lessons and this term we gave our parents the opportunity to join us for a taster lesson. It was lovely to share and celebrate our progress in reading with so many parents and carers.

### Class 1

Class 1 have really enjoyed their learning this term and have enjoyed the glimpses of Spring sunshine and the change in the season. We have been watching seeds changing and growing into plants and frogspawn becoming tadpoles and hopefully frogs.





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Our History focus this term is 'Homes in the past' and we have been thinking about Victorian houses as well as learning about our own houses. We have been learning vocabulary associated with houses including terraced, detached and bungalow. World Book Day was a super celebration of our favourite stories. Dressing up is always fun and in Class 1 there were soldiers, unicorns, pirates, ladybirds, princesses, cats, dogs and many more. Topping off the day was our AK treat in the afternoon and for this we enjoyed popcorn, hot chocolate and 'The Scarecrow's Wedding'.



We enjoyed an 'Under the sea' themed Art day inspired by our English focus text 'The Storm Whale'.

We created beautiful shells and fish

using collage, pattern and texture. Inspired by the promise of Spring we made dancing daffodils to go on our cards for Mother's Day. We hope our Mummy's loved them!

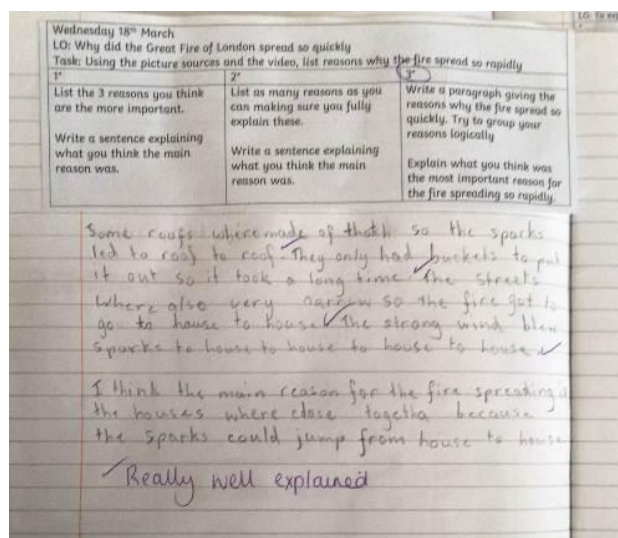


## Class 2



We have had another fabulous term in Class 2, the children have all been working so hard and we have seen some amazing progress in lots of areas. One of these areas has been handwriting, with some children trying to apply their learning on joining letters to their independent writing. We have been great historians looking at the Great Fire of London, we know lots about when it started and why it spread so quickly. Our art days with Mrs Dyminski were a huge success as always, the children absolutely love this quality time with an art specialist. Mrs Dyminski worked with them to create gorgeous

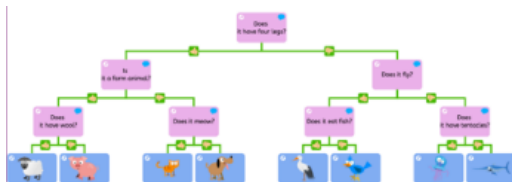
colour wheel inspired lions and the cutest Paddington bear drawings. We obviously also need to mention our fantastic class assembly that has just taken place, we were so proud of every single child. They spoke clearer and confidently, sharing their learning and even playing their recorders. Well done Class 2, here is to next term!





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### Class 3



We have had a brilliant term! We have been busy learning all about light in Science – looking at transparent, translucent and opaque objects and how shadows are created. In History, we have continued our learning on the Stone, Bronze and Iron Age. The children have loved understanding how life was in this prehistoric time. In computing, we have been looking at making our own branching databases using yes or no questions. We really enjoyed our Paddington dance workshop for World Book Day. We are really looking forward to the Summer term together with so many new opportunities to look forward to including our first residential, the Class 3 camp!



**Class 4** This half term, the children had a fantastic time at forest school, using blindfolds and working in pairs, leading one another across the field, avoiding obstacles and listening to one another's voices as an indication of where to go. They then worked in groups, with the person in front being blindfolded, and had to ensure no-one was left behind.



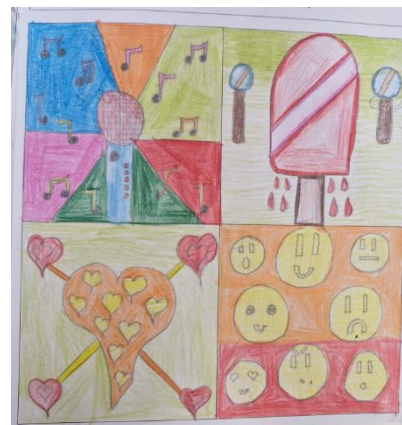
They then worked in groups, with the person in front being blindfolded, and had to ensure no-one was left behind.



In English, we have been creating an explanation text about the course of a river. This has included sections on the upper, middle and lower course. The children have taken a really keen interest in this and their writing has been fantastic. They've made fabulous use of fronted adverbials, subject specific vocabulary and even some subordinate clauses. What superstars!

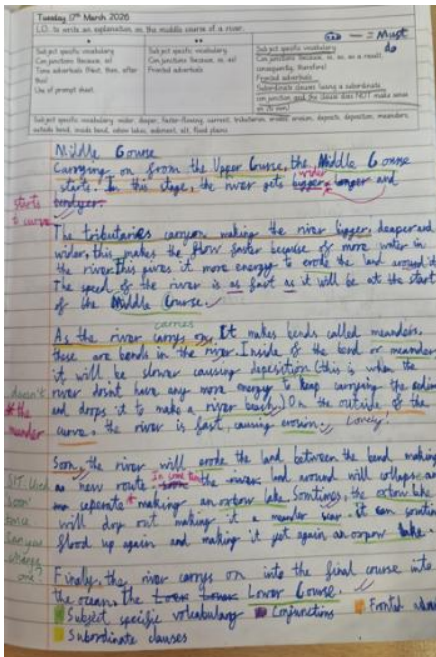
Class 4 are officially experts on rivers as we are learning about this in geography. They know all about features of rivers and how they are formed, such as waterfalls, gorges and meanders. They'll never look at a river in the same way again!

The children have enjoyed their art days with Mrs. Dyminski where they were developing their watercolour skills and learning about Minimalism. They were very proud of the beautiful art they produced.

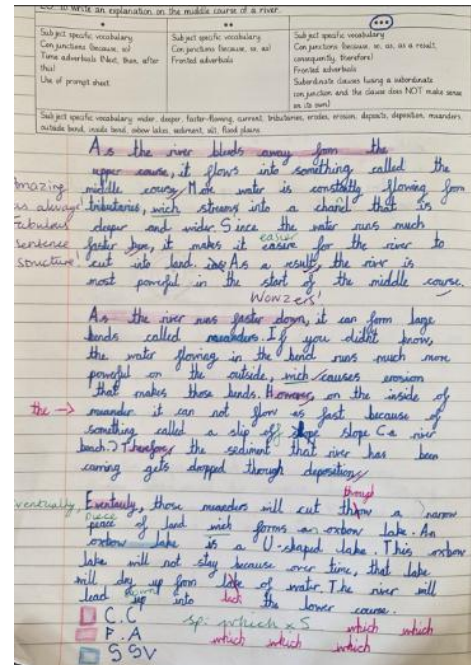




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In science we have been learning about electrical circuits and have enjoyed building circuits and testing components including bulbs, switches and buzzers. We had fun seeing if bulbs would still light when coins, spoons and paperclips were added to their circuits to test conductors and insulators.



## Class 5



In Year 5 we have had a busy, busy term! We've been learning to talk about clothes in French and the colours they are. We have continued the story of Beowulf and have been creating our own myths which we have made into little books with front covers, maps and blurbs. We have been creating soft toys as part of DT. We designed our toys having looked at popular soft toys in shops. We then learnt about creating paper patterns and how to do blanket stitch. As part of the design process, we realised that sometimes you might have to make adaptations as you are creating depending on how things are going. We are INCREDIBLY proud of the creatures we have sewn!





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## Class 6



We have had another action-packed half term in school and the children have continued to work exceptionally hard. In Forest School, we were lucky enough to have a visit from James who works as an ecologist at Lower Mill Estate. Following our pond being relined recently, the children were tasked with making newt egg laying strips as we currently have a lack of vegetation around the edge of our school pond. The children used pond liners, pebbles and teamwork to



successfully create the egg laying strips. Class 6 also enjoyed pond dipping in the session and looking for evidence of newts (including great-crested) living in our school pond. James shared his expertise and the children had lots of fun. A special mention to Eva who found a great-crested newt! In English this term we have been continuing to read the novel *Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo. We have been writing TripAdvisor style customer reviews to share family 'holidays' to Kensuke's Island. The children found this particularly enjoyable and many of the children enjoyed giving the resort a 1-star rating!



In Science, we have enjoyed learning the key components of a balanced diet. We have learnt about the different food groups and the different types of fats. We have also learnt about drugs and how some drugs are classified as being legal or illegal. We looked at painkillers, depressants and stimulants and the impacts they can have on the body. We have also learnt about what cigarettes are made up of and the health risks associated with smoking.

In History, we have enjoyed continuing with learning about Ancient Greece. We have made Top Trump style cards of Greek Gods and Goddesses as well as learning about the importance of the Olympic Games in Ancient Greek culture and the balance of religious, social and sporting activities at the Ancient Olympics.

## Mock Trials WINNERS!

Yes, you heard correctly Ashton Keynes won both our mock trial case but also were crowned as the overall winning school this year! A huge well done to the group of year 6 pupils who took part in the Mock Trials at Cirencester Baptist Church. The event is designed to give children a true taste of what a courtroom is really like and allows them to compete against another school. Previous to this, all of Year 6 experienced an excellent visit from the Magistrates to further learn about Democracy and the Rule of Law. Then a team of pupils prepared and attended a mock trial against another local school. We were the prosecution team and at the end of the trial, a guilty verdict was given! All of the children performed admirably and it was very evident



on the day that they had spent lots of time rehearsing and learning their lines carefully as the whole group performed without using a single script! During their performance they were assessed and graded and awarded points and, on this basis, many of our children won individual prizes and I am truly delighted to



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announce that we were the overall winning team from the whole competition of around 12 primary schools! Excellent opportunity for our school to put the rule of law into action and we are very thankful to be able to participate in this annual competition. What an achievement!

### World Book Day

That's a wrap on world book day (or should we say week!), the children all loved dressing up as their favourite book character. The costumes were brilliant and certainly put a smile on everyone's faces. It was great to see the children asking questions about each other's character choice and the book they were from. Abi Evans kindly provided us with another fantastic book themed dance workshop for the whole school. She created some amazing dance routines based on the book Paddington Bear; the children thoroughly enjoyed these workshops so a big thank you to Abi. The reading leaders did a great job in organising a book character search on the field. The challenged the children to identify famous book characters and tell us what book they thought they were from. It was good fun.

### Quiz Club Inter Schools National Maths Competition

It was great to see so many Y5 and Y6 pupils compete in the Team Selection Quiz for a place in the Quiz Club Inter Schools Maths Competition. Evie, George, Henry, Leo, Max, Noah, Otis and Raffy were selected to represent the school. Both teams of four worked incredibly hard to prepare for the competition with Evie, Henry, Noah and Otis making it through to the semi-final. The questions were extremely challenging with questions well beyond the KS2 Maths curriculum. Both teams worked impressively well under time pressure and we are very proud of them. Well done!

Special thanks to our parent helpers, Peter Graham and Sara Branscomb for all their help and mathematical brilliance in preparing the teams.



### Primary Maths Challenge

Children in Y5 and Y6 took part in the Primary Maths Challenge. This is national Maths challenge where children participate individually to complete 25 maths questions of increasing difficulty. Special mention to



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David Furman in Y5 who made it through to the Bonus Round. Well done, David, an excellent achievement - we look forward to seeing you do it again in Year 6!

### **Farewell Ms. Harrold**

We would like to say Goodbye and Good luck to one of our teaching assistants Ms. Harrold. Jane has been with us for almost 9 years and has been a very special part of our team. Jane has decided to leave the school setting to work in after school provision and also work using another of her many talents, food and cooking. I am sure you will join us in wishing Ms. Harrold all the very best for a happy and shiny future. She will be so missed but we are excited for her with her new opportunities. Thank you for being part of Team AK, Jane - Good luck!

### **Thank you FOAKS**

A huge thank you to our FOAKS team and volunteers for the annual Disco which happened in Term 4 this year. We are very excited about the next event, The AK Summer Fete on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 12-4pm so for now save the date as the team are planning another very special event for you all! If last year's fete was anything to go by, we are in for a real treat! Save the date we would love as many people as possible to attend - bring friends, neighbours and of course any help people can give, no matter how small it's always massively appreciated. All important for providing community events and raising much needed funds for the school.

It was beautiful to see many of you in Heroes and Heroines this morning celebrating our wonderful children - it is so good to be back! It was wonderful to hand out so many new sparkly purple stars to all the pupils who are leading with impact in school and serve our school community every day: Worship Council, School Council, Wellbeing ambassadors and tech leads. May I take this opportunity on behalf of my team to wish you all a Happy Easter, I hope the sun shines on us all! We look forward to welcoming you back to school for the Summer term on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 8.45am.

Best wishes,

*Mrs Saville*

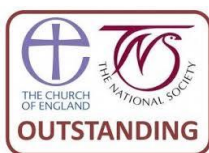
Mrs. Saville

*All dates for the year are on the calendar on the school website on [www.akps.org.uk](http://www.akps.org.uk) to help you plan ahead. All newsletters and annual overviews have been sent to parents and carers but can also be found on class pages of our website*

# ASHTON KEYNES


Church of England VC Primary School

SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



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