



# Hillside Specialist School & College

Providing exceptional education for all students

## FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2025

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Thursday 13th February  
LAST DAY OF TERM
- Friday 14th February  
INSET Day
- Monday 24th February  
SCHOOL REOPENS
- Monday 7th April to Monday 21st April  
EASTER BREAK

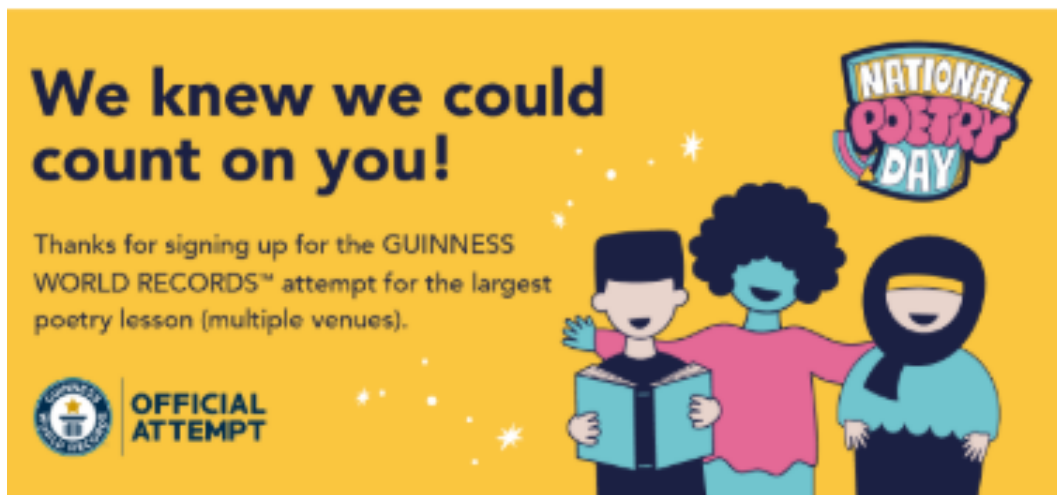


# Arbor

Please make sure you download the Arbor app as this is where we send important messages and you can see pupil information



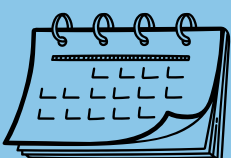
## Well done!



On the 3rd October 2024 we participated in the attempt to break the GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ title for Largest Poetry Lesson (Multiple Venues).

**WE HAVE GOOD NEWS** - we were one of the 500 schools that successfully completed the record attempt!!!!

Thank you to all the pupils and staff who participated, we are very proud to be part of this!



### REMINDER:

## SCHOOL REOPENS ON MONDAY 24TH FEBRUARY



## Congratulations

To Chantelle, our Class 1 teacher who has passed her NPQ in Early Years Leadership. It's a fantastic achievement!



## Happy holidays



It's great to see that our pupils have been involved in such a range of activities, both in school and out in the community, and I am pleased to see that our students are making progress towards their qualifications. We have even been part of a world record poetry lesson. A great achievement for our pupils!

A big thank you to all of our staff for supporting pupils in their progress this half term and thank you to you all for your continued support you provide towards school.

Enjoy the half term.

Paul Leaper - Headteacher.



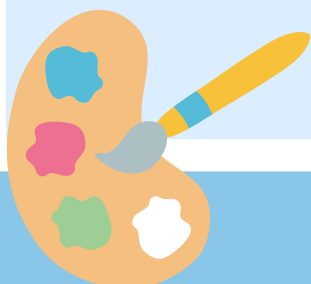
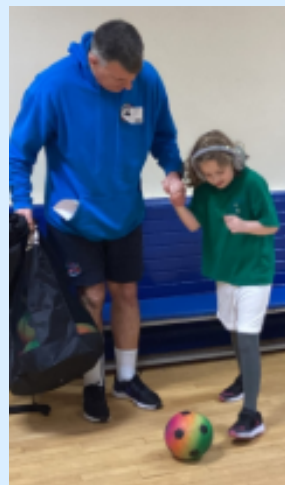
## Class 5

This Spring term we have been travelling to France with our sensory stories; Escargot by Dashka Slater and then a non-fiction story looking at all the different landmarks in Paris, lots of fun tuff trays and learning activities too. We have enjoyed sliding slimy snails, crushing grapes in our vineyard, playing with Disney characters and pretending to be in the snow on Mont Blanc, we even had a huge Eiffel Tower in class.

In maths we have been exploring 2d shapes; hunts, dances, artwork, sorting and matching.

Our RE sessions looked at the festival of Chinese New Year, the children loved these sensory sessions; waving red and gold flags, opening red envelopes for treats, making our own Chinese dragons and lamps and trying lots of different foods using chopsticks! Making lots of noise was so much fun in science, quiet sounds, loud sounds and exploring other environments to hear the differences; pots and pans, outdoor instruments, iPads, drums, wind instruments to name a few! PSHE was all about our emotions and we looked at ways to regulate; things we like to do which makes us happy, things to do when we are angry, we made worry dolls for when we are anxious and that all these emotions are ok! Superball Paul came to help with our PE working on ball skills too.

The class 5 team wishes everyone a safe and happy half term.



# CLASS NEWS



What a start to 2025 we have had in Class 2. Our topic this half term has been all about 'Toys and Dinosaurs'. We have had Millie in class with us who has enjoyed teaching the children for some of the week.

**English** - We have shared three sensory stories together 'The Magical Toy Box' and 'If I had a Dinosaur' and 'Giganotosaurus'. The children loved exploring all the sensory props and have started to become familiar with the characters in the stories. They have also been sequencing and retelling the story too.

**Maths** - In maths we have been busy learning about time. The children have been becoming familiar with the features of an analogue clock and reading the time in hours. Some children took this a step further and transferred their skills across to read a digital clock. Others have been working on sequencing of events. E.g. eating an apple, washing their hands.

**Computing** - the topic this half term has been exploring directions and the children have become familiar with the terms left, right, forwards and backwards. They did this through two songs 'Over the deep blue sea and a left and right song'. They moved themselves in those directions, explored and programmed the beebots effectively.

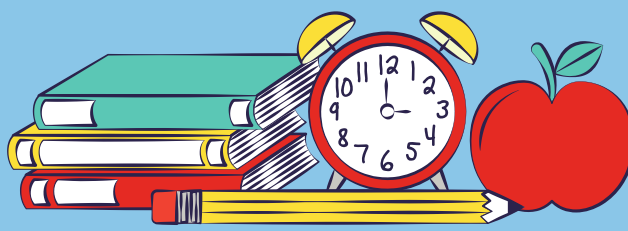
**Music and DT** - We have been exploring different instruments in class with a focus on ones that you can hit, blow, shake and pluck. Afterwards we even made some of our own instruments and used them each week too. It has been great fun!

Our PE lessons have been focused on developing a range of skills linked to games. E.g. throwing, catching and rolling a ball to staff and to a peer, aiming beanbags into hoops and buckets. The children really enjoyed the warm up and cool down too. It is great to see the children engaging so well with all elements of the PE session. The bean game to start was a hit and they all listened to the instructions well.

Have a lovely half term!  
The Class 2 team



# CLASS NEWS



Class 6 has had a busy half term. Our theme has been 'France'. We have enjoyed reading our information text all about France alongside exploring the sensory props. Everyone loved having a go on the skis 😊

In our English and communication sessions, we have also been working hard on our fine motor skills, mark making and writing. We then moved onto playing games with our peers working on communication and turn taking. We also have individual/small group phonics sessions.

In Maths, we focused on measurement to begin with before moving onto our number work. Our afternoon sessions have included identifying sounds, playing musical instruments and making music on the iPads in Science and Computing, building the Eiffel tower using magnet tiles, knex, bricks, straws and clay in Design Technology, learning about Earth for some in Geography and others focused on engaging in the world around them. In PE, all the pupils have enjoyed moving in different ways on the apparatus in our gymnastics topic.

We have lots to look forward to next half term too!





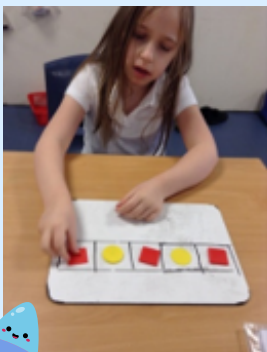
Wow! What a quick and busy term it has been. Class 4 has had an extremely busy yet enjoyable half term, exploring and learning all about 'The United Kingdom'. We have thoroughly enjoyed our exciting literary adventure across The United Kingdom! We have explored a range of captivating fiction and non-fiction texts, bringing each country to life as we travelled together.

We continued to explore The United Kingdom, through our Geography and music; learning about the four nations that make up the UK—England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. We have explored famous landmarks such as Big Ben, Edinburgh Castle, Snowdonia, and the Giant's Causeway, using maps and globes to locate them. The children have listened to and played Scottish bagpipe tunes, Welsh folk songs, Irish jigs, and classic English sea shanties! We have even had a go at clapping out rhythms inspired by traditional dances and experimented with different percussion instruments to mimic sounds from each region.

This half term, our young mathematicians have been busy exploring the wonderful world of shapes! Through hands-on activities, games, and creative challenges, the children have been developing their understanding of 2D and 3D shapes and learning how to describe their properties with confidence. Our little detectives have been searching high and low for different shapes in our classroom and outdoor spaces. From circular wheels on bikes to rectangular signs around school, they've discovered that shapes are everywhere!

This term has been full of energy, movement, and fun as the children have been making waves in their swimming lessons and dancing their way across the globe! The children have been working hard in the pool, focusing on their individual targets to build confidence, technique, and water safety skills. It has been wonderful to see their determination and progress each week. Most importantly, they have been having fun and growing in confidence in the water! Our dance lessons have taken us on a global adventure as we've explored different dance styles. The children have loved trying new rhythms, learning simple steps, and expressing themselves through movement.

We hope you all have a lovely half term break,  
Kelly and the class 4 team.



# CLASS NEWS



This half term Class 14 have been working really hard in Class and have been enjoying trips into the community. Our AQA topic this half term has been dealing with problems in daily life, we have been looking at how we feel when things go wrong and how we can react differently, people who can help us and how others might feel. We have been enjoying our swimming sessions, building up our confidence in the water (including the teachers!) and have been practising our different water skills. For ASDAN we have been looking at who is in our families and we have made an 'all about me' PowerPoint with videos and recordings which we have shared with the class. In maths we have been counting and learning about '0' and have enjoyed looking at different rocks in science.



This half term class 9 have enjoyed using beanbags in PE, balancing them, throwing them using their hands and a scoop and throwing to a partner, they have become really skilled with this! In English we have enjoyed reading 'Giraffes Can't Dance' and have been practising using the correct pronouns.

Our Maths has been based on time, we have been using language related to time and sequencing events.

In our science lessons our focus has been hot and cold. We have explored hot and cold items and enjoyed tasting these. We have also taken part in science experiments trying to melt things.

Our topic in geography was Africa. We have enjoyed doing African art and learning facts about Africa and we did really well in a quiz!

In computing we have been practising following visual instructions to programme beebots.

Have a lovely half term.



# CLASS NEWS



**Class 12 have had a jam packed half term!**

In Maths and English we've been busy with exam preparations which will begin in Spring 2 and into Summer 1. Everyone has been working hard, particularly with their speaking and listening skills. Each pupil's exam dates will be sent home soon. Pupils have been enjoying our PE sessions, learning to play dodgeball – the pupil vs staff game being extremely popular!

We're lucky to have had SENDsafe in from the local fire brigade service, who have been coming into Class 12 to teach us all about hazards in the home, what to do when discovering a fire and evacuation plans. In PSHE this term we've been learning various first aid via the St John Ambulance courses. Learning how to help someone who is bleeding, has burns or scalds, head injuries or an allergic reaction.

We've enjoyed a range of trips this half term, focusing on our future and careers. Such as various college visits as well as a whole class trip to Preston North End Football Club. We got a tour of the stadium and they discussed the various jobs and careers that they offer at the club. We've continued with our enterprise project – making/selling/delivering breakfast sandwiches to staff. We're hoping to release our updated menu soon!

Have a lovely half term break,

James and the Class 12 team.





# CLASS NEWS



Class 10 have had a great start to the Spring 2025 term. In English we have been reading *Rumble in the Jungle*. Pupils have enjoyed sensory aspects of this story, exploring leaves, twigs and sensory messy play along with different animal toys. Class 10 pupils have all developed their engagement and communication skills during our story through theme boards and colourful semantics. Pupils have all made brilliant progress in different areas of Math, completing practical sorting activities, addition and subtraction. In Geography pupils have enjoyed sensory stories based on Africa, smelling different African spices and going on a virtual safari. In class 10 pupils are working towards their ASDAN Supporting Aspirations qualification, this term we have been making our own toast at snack times to develop independence and learn safety when using technology. In PSHE we have been learning about self-care and hygiene. In Science we have been exploring hot and cold items and learning how to keep safe.

Have a lovely half term everyone! 😊





## Class 1

This half term has been a short but busy one! We have enjoyed a range of activities on the topic of 'superheroes'! The children have really enjoyed our sensory stories; '10 little Superheroes' by Mike Brownlow and Simon Rickerty and 'Supertato' by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet. In maths we began by exploring the counting rhyme '5 little superheroes' and have been making groups and comparing these (ie which group has more and which has less, can we make two groups the same?).

In the afternoons we have continued with our dough disco sessions and have also enjoyed a range of messy play, creative and malleable play activities on the theme, including exploring superhero dough, popcorn 'smash' and frozen superheroes! We have also had fun exploring different instruments and learning songs on our superhero theme. This past week we have enjoyed making our own 'super vegetables'! We have all enjoyed our peer play sessions in both the sensory and interaction rooms and the children are now developing some lovely friendships within class 😊

## Class 8 have had an excellent start to 2025.

In English we have completed activities linked to 'War-Horse' and 'The Old Toy Room.' We have continued to practice speaking and listening skills, individual/shared reading, comprehension, and writing.

During Maths we have completed activities linked to number and shape.

In Science we have investigated Materials.

Our PSHE lessons have focused on the importance of 'rules'. We have also developed our awareness of what to expect during an Annual Health Check.

During our Creative Curriculum sessions, we have completed cake making in Food Technology and explored the 1950's to the present day in History.

Our PE lessons have focused on developing fitness and stamina through circuits and making progress with technique during yoga sessions.

In RE we have explored Sikhism.

Each Friday we have celebrated our achievements in our Key-Stage assembly.

Have a great half-term break everyone from Class 8



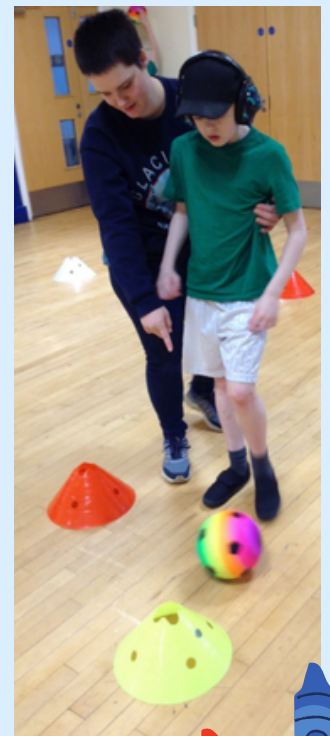
# CLASS NEWS



**Class 7 - This half term we have had great fun in Forest Schools – we have enjoyed sensory sessions, plant and bug hunts and even learned some new skills using different tools to cut and drill wood.**



**We have been learning to follow rules and to improve our ball skills during team games with Super Ball Paul.**



We have had a brilliant half term in Class 3. The children have been learning about Toys and Dinosaurs which was lots of fun!

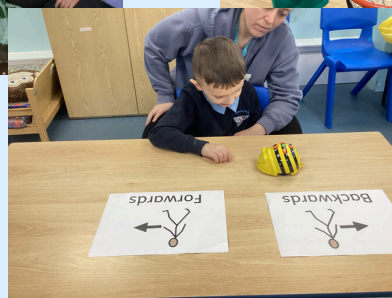
In English, the children enjoyed listening to our two class stories 'The Magical Toy Box and The Very First Dino'. During our English sessions, the children have completed a range of activities linked to each story. They described the different characters from the magical toybox, had their very own disco just like the toys did in the story and sequenced the pictures to retell the story once we had finished reading it. After reading 'The Very First Dino' the children made predictions about the animal that was hiding in the egg, talked about the dinosaurs feelings and had their own talent show to showcase their own hidden talents just like the dinosaur did in the story.

In Maths this half term, the children have been learning all about different positions and directions. The children really enjoyed exploring different positions and placed themselves and their favourite toys inside, outside, on, under, in-front and behind different pieces of equipment. It was lots of fun! As the children gained confidence with this, they moved onto learning about different directions including forwards and backwards and even had a go at travelling over benches, balance beams before sending the beebots over them aswell.

During our Topic lessons, the children have really enjoyed exploring old and new toys, sorted toys into groups based on which age group would like to play with them and talked about their favourite toys. The children also really enjoyed learning all about the different types of dinosaurs and explored different fossils before having a go at making their own dinosaur fossil using paper straws.

To finish off our topic, the children enjoyed a trip to The Gruffalo Clubhouse and Build a Bear. They loved exploring the tree house and meeting the different characters from 'The Gruffalo' story and making their own class bears in Build a Bear. The children made two bears and named them Snowy and Brownie.

We are all so proud of all of the children's hard work this term!



# FUNDRAISING NEWS



*The PSFA Christmas Raffle  
raised £180*



**Raised  
£42  
for the PSFA**

**We really appreciate all the support!**



Sign up today at [www.YourSchoolLottery.co.uk/play](http://www.YourSchoolLottery.co.uk/play)

For every ticket sold 76% goes towards school and prizes. If you would like to take part please go to <https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/> to join. £1 per ticket!