

Oakwood Primary School

Newsletter



Friday 13th October 2023

Dear Oakwood Community,

We hope you enjoy this bumper edition of our fortnightly newsletter, which includes a feature on World Mental Health Day alongside our usual updates on children's learning.

This week we have welcomed Miss Schalkwyk, TA in Sycamore, and Mr Kelly in the office. At the end of next week we will say goodbye to Miss George and we wish her well in her future role.

We would like to remind you that our Behaviour Policy survey is now live, please complete this 2-minute survey by Monday 16th October.

<https://forms.office.com/e/mD5UM622m0>

Have a great weekend!

The Oakwood Team

Correction to our previous newsletter: World Mental Health Day was on Tuesday 10th October, not Sunday 8th October.

PTA Lend a Hand Day

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the parents, carers, and volunteers who supported us at the most recent PTA "Lend a Hand Day." Your support and hard work were truly invaluable and made a significant difference.

During the "Lend a Hand Day," our dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to enhance our school's outdoor areas. Not only did they tidy up the KS1 garden and outdoor space, but they also accomplished some wonderful feats:

KS2 Gardening Area: A brand new KS2 gardening area was created, offering our older students an exciting space to nurture their green thumbs.

Bug Hotel: The team built a fantastic bug hotel that not only adds charm to our outdoor space but also provides a habitat for the local insect population.

Composting Area: A composting area was established, reinforcing our commitment to sustainability and environmental education.

The results of your hard work are truly awe-inspiring, and we can't thank you enough for your dedication in making our school's outdoor areas look great!

Recommended reading...

At Oakwood, we really value reading and see it as the gateway to knowledge and one of life's key pleasures!

We hope you and your children enjoy this week's selection of **Black History Month** themed books.

Reception

Coming to England

Author: Floella Benjamin

Illustrator: Diane Ewen



Key Stage 1

Our Story Starts in Africa

Author: Patrice Lawrence

Illustrator: Jeanetta Gonzales

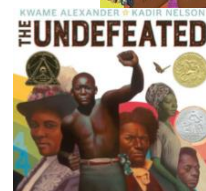


Lower Key Stage 2

The Undefeated

Author: Kwame Alexander

Illustrator: Kadir Nelson



Upper Key Stage 2

Timelines from Black History:

Leaders, Legends, Legacies

Author: Introduction by: Mireille Harper

Illustrator: Lauren Quinn



Please do visit your local library to select from a fantastic range of books. [Locations and opening times are here.](#)

Important dates for your diary...

Tuesday 17 th October, 4pm – 7pm	Parent Teacher Consultations (Online)
Thursday 19 th October, 4pm	Cross Country League, Fleetville School
Thursday 19 th October, 4pm – 7pm	Parent Teacher Consultations (Online)
Monday 23 rd October – Friday 27 th October	HALF TERM – SCHOOL CLOSED
CHILDREN RETURN TO SCHOOL ON MONDAY 30th OCTOBER	
Tuesday 31 st October	Deadline for Year 6 secondary school applications
Thursday 2 nd November	UKS2 visit to Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple
Thursday 2 nd November, 3:15pm	Y6 netball match (home)

**Our school website address: www.oakwood.herts.sch.uk
School contact details: admin@oakwood.herts.sch.uk
01727 753930**

Spotlight on... Computing

In computing lessons, our aim is for children to develop as respectful, responsible and confident users of technology. They gain knowledge and skills to become active participants in the ever-changing digital world.

Around Oakwood, there is always a buzz in computing lessons and the joy for the subject is evident. Computing lessons inspire children through use of physical robots, such as bee bots, and up to date software as well as 'unplugged' lessons where no computers are used. This variety keeps children engaged and eagerly anticipating what is to come.

There are many ways you can help your child at home. Provide your child with the independence to log into their Google Classroom from as young as Year 1. Help them find creative ways to remember their password. Touch typing is a crucial skill and can result in work being completed efficiently in lessons. Websites such as [BBC's Dance Mat](#) and [Typing Club](#) are fun, free ways to develop this skill.

Get talking about e-safety with your child! Have open conversations about what they are doing online and how they can keep themselves safe on the apps, websites or games they are using. Be clued in with the age ratings of certain apps, for example Whatsapp is 16+. To help you get the conversation started, the [UK Safer Internet Centre website](#) has some useful guides and resources free to use.

Additionally, in the computing area of the Oakwood website is a helpful list of e-safety themed books which could spark discussion.

For more information about how we support children's computing learning at Oakwood, please visit our updated computing page under the 'Curriculum' tab on our school website:

[Computing | Oakwood Primary School](#)

Learning around Oakwood: Lime

Last week, Lime became Earth Explorers during our Volcanoes and Earthquakes workshop. It was an action packed, drama filled session where we were transported to different countries around the world! First, we packed our bags for our expedition and ensured we had the right equipment.



We then boarded the plane to fly to Italy and visit the famous Mount Vesuvius and Mount Etna.

Along the way, we learnt some fantastic facts about famous Earthquakes. Our next stop was USA where we discussed Mount St. Helens major eruption in 1980. Next up was Japan and our final destination was Chile where we learned about The Great Chilean Earthquake in 1960 that measured 9.5 on the Richter Scale. The children really enjoyed the session and learned lots of facts about volcanoes and earthquakes.



"It was really fun and I liked learning facts about Mt Etna. It is the only volcano that can create smoke rings," Sophie.

"I enjoyed getting on the plane and going to different countries," Joseph.

"I liked pretending to be different volcanoes – active, extinct and dormant," Poppy.

"I liked it when we pretended to be an earthquake at 9.5 on the Richter Scale," Hannah.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about bullying, please email safeguardingteam@oakwood.herts.sch.uk

For urgent concerns, please telephone the school office

Learning around Oakwood: Ash

Over the past few weeks in Ash class, in our RE lessons, we have been learning to re-tell the Christian Creation story and to explore how this influences how Christians behave towards nature and the environment.

Our key enquiry questions is: Does God want Christians to look after the world?

We passed some beautiful natural objects around the circle and thought how amazing things are in nature. Everybody took a turn to say what they loved about nature.

"I love sunsets at the seaside"

"Swimming in the sea and looking in rock pools"

"I love cats –they're my favourite part of nature"

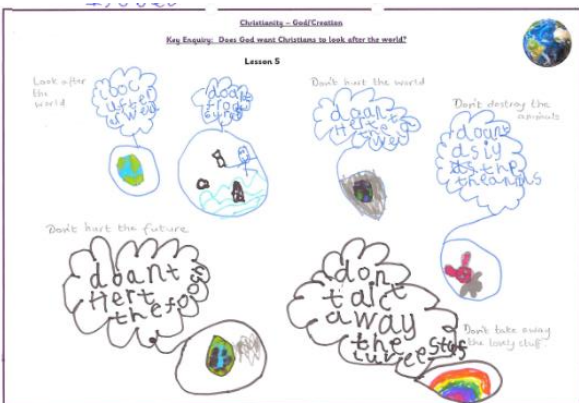
"I love thunderstorms and splashing in puddles"

"Rainbows are so pretty to look at"

"Butterflies and bees and pollinators are my favourite"

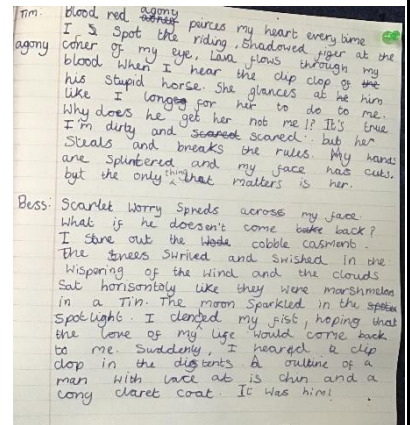
"I like volcanoes and dinosaur bones"

We read the story "Wonderful Earth" by Nick Butterfield and learned how Christians believe the world was created. We also learned how humans have not looked after the world and came up with some ideas of how we can all help the world to recover. We designed posters to share our ideas.



Work of the week!

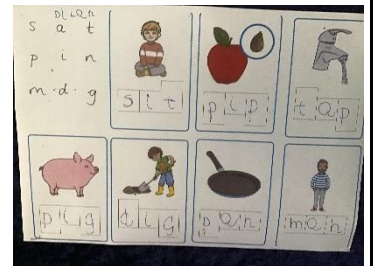
Aila in Rowan



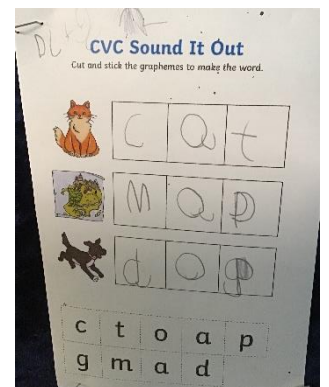
Rowan class have been learning to develop a character by exploring their thoughts and emotions. Our work was based upon the narrative poem 'The Highway Man' by Alfred Noyes.

Aila used a series of rhetorical questions to give her reader an insight into her character's mind. She used metaphors and an extended noun phrase to add detail.

Dilan in Acorns 1



In Acorns 1 we have been learning our phonemes and graphemes. We are using our phonics to help us start to write simple words.



During Busy Fingers and Active Learning, we practise the skills we need for writing in lots of different ways. Dilan chose to complete a phonics challenge. He was able to independently use his phonics to sound out and write each word.

Well done Aila and Dilan!

Families Hertfordshire Magazine

Please find a link to the latest digital issue of Families Hertfordshire Magazine, packed with articles and activities for the coming weeks

<https://issuu.com/familiesonline/docs/fh112so23dm?fr=5MDvjYzY2NTE2NDA>

Celebration Assembly

Every week, Key Stage Celebration Assemblies are held to mark children's successes, efforts and achievement individually and as a class. In the last two weeks, the following prizes were awarded to...

Over the last two weeks, the following prizes were awarded to...



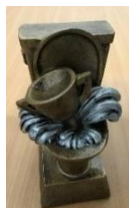
'Golden Dustpan and Brush' for the tidiest classroom – Cherry and Beech

'Golden Clock' for the class with the best attendance and punctuality – Poplar and Sycamore



'Golden Knife and Fork' for the best manners in the hall at lunchtime – Acorns 1 and Acorns 2

The 'Golden Toilet' for the cleanest and most looked after class toilets – Rowan and Acorns 2



'Person of the Week' for demonstrating values which are important to everyone in our school:

Ash – Lyla
Beech – Lila
Cherry – James
Lime – Evie
Maple – Billy
Poplar – Kamran
Rowan – Sophia
Sycamore – Felicity
Willow – Lilly



Year 6 visit: Crucial Crew

On Thursday 5th October Year 6 were invited by the local fire station to a 'Crucial Crew' workshop. Every year they work with local primary schools preparing the Year 6s for the world they are about to enter in a safe environment. 29 local schools took up this workshop. The afternoon was spent learning about dangers in the local area. Workshops concentrated on drugs and drink, electricity, roads and computers among many others.

Here's what our pupils had to say:

'The presentations were brilliant and informative'

'I enjoyed putting on the 'drunk' glasses and seeing everything differently'

'Even if you are dared to do something, around train lines, no matter what they tell you - Don't do it'

Year 6: PGL

Following their exciting residential trip, the Year 6 children wrote a letter to year 5s about their experiences.

Dear Year 5,
We have just had the best time at PGL. We were so lucky to go to PGL in Osington Bay, Weymouth, Dorset.

On Wednesday morning we left St. Athanas and set off in a coach. We got to the PGL camp at around lunch time and got a tour of the camp before our activities started. We were split into some groups. Our group had Mrs Jurett and our first activity was Jacob's ladder where we had to work as a team to reach the top. It was harder than it looked and you had to trust your group because they were holding your rope to keep you safe.

After Jacob's ladder, we had the Sensory trail. In the Sensory trail our sight was taken away from us because we had to wear dark goggles which we couldn't see. We played games and then did 3 obstacle courses which were hard with goggles but, easy without them. When we took our goggles off and realised how easy the obstacle courses were I thought, how did it take us so long. After the sensory trail, we found out who was in our room and everyone was excited, we didn't sleep well the first night but we did on the second.

The next day, we got to go to the sandpit, a giant sandpit where you could build sandcastles, roll down hills and play football. Afternoon we did Abseiling. It was really high up and scary our group got two goes each and it was so scary. In the afternoon we went kayaking and we had to wear wet wetsuits.

Kayaking was so fun we got to yell up one of the instructors Kayaks with rubber ducks whilst Kayaking. At the end we got to sing head shoulder knees and toes but we had to put that bodypart into the water instead of touching it. For dinner we got to eat chocolate cake which was so tasty.

On the last day we started with Giant Swing which was my favourite activity. We were lifted into the air and we pulled a rope. When we pulled the rope we were dropped from midair and went really quickly. Up next was aeroball, I wasn't very good at aeroball and only scored 7 goals. We got to do a tournament and our team which was called Pink Turkey came 3rd place. We left PGL and had a 3 hour and a half coach trip back.

I really thank the teachers for giving up their time and leaving their families to take us to PGL.

Harry K

Please remember if you have any queries or questions, do make an appointment to come and speak to a member of staff. We are always very happy to meet with you. Don't let a little worry become a big one!

World Mental Health Day 2023

All classes at Oakwood explored themes of wellbeing and Mental Health over the past two weeks. Read on for some examples of activities that classes took part in:



For World Mental Health Day, Beech class learned about the importance of our mental health and all of the ways in which their mental health is supported in school. We discussed how play times, movement breaks, healthy, balanced lunches and snacks all support us in keeping our minds healthy. We read the books 'Blue' and 'Find Your Happy', both of which reiterated the importance of sharing worries with a trusted person in our personal support networks. These books shared with the children how to identify if they are feeling worried, angry, shy, etc. and strategies to support them in 'finding their happy' again.

Lime Class spent some time thinking about why mental health is so important and what we do in school to support our mental health.

We also watched a video about kindness and how kindness doesn't just help other people but also improves our own mental health. When we experience kindness, a hormone called dopamine is released in our brain which gives us a feeling of elevation. It can also help strengthen our relationships, build cooperation and help us feel great. We have spent the last few days watching and discussing *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*.



"It's good to be kind just like in the movie. You should ask people how they feel." Matthew

"Always be helpful and ask people how they are feeling" Harriet

"I think mental health is really important because it is not just about our bodies, it is about our brain and how we are feeling too" Izzy

"Being kind, helpful and respectful helps our mental health" Poppy

For more information on how Oakwood supports mental health and wellbeing, please see the curriculum page on our website:

[Mental Health and Wellbeing | Oakwood Primary School](#)