



The Federation of  
Fairfield and Colneis



Dear Parent/Carer,



It is time for another newsletter! I can't quite believe where this half term has gone. Looking through the newsletter I am always so impressed and grateful to all our staff for putting together such a rich and varied range of activities for our children. Whether it is trips to Pipers Vale, outdoor learning opportunities, fruit kebab making or work on Children's Mental Health Week, there is always so much going on across our schools. We are also very proud of our Year 6 children who lead weekly 'values' assemblies virtually to both schools where they showcase and discuss the importance of our values.

School attendance remains a key priority for schools nationally and does for us as well. Every school day counts, and as you can see from the table below, an attendance rate of 90% would equate to 20 days off school each year - 4 weeks in total which is a significant amount of time lost. Whilst we understand that there are times that children inevitably are unwell and need to be absent from school, promoting healthy attendance even with minor illnesses is important. I have also included as part of this newsletter some guidance on minor illnesses and when it is appropriate to send children to school (*page 10*). Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Finally, I hope that you have a good half term and we will look forward to seeing the children back to school on Monday 26th February.

Best wishes and kind regards

*Mr Mark Girling*

Headteacher

### Every School Day Counts



# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

February 2024

# News from Nursery

## Children's Mental Health Week

We pride ourselves on providing a range of activities throughout our sessions which support the children's wellbeing and help to promote their physical and emotional development. Mental health and wellbeing starts from birth and we as parents and practitioners have a duty to ensure we provide the best opportunities for children to thrive.



## Story Dough

Story Dough is a short activity which puts the children at the centre of their learning. It allows us some quality time exploring stories, manipulating playdough, learning new vocabulary, connecting mark-making with positive emotion and going on an adventure together using imagination and make-believe. The children have embraced this activity and we are all enjoying the joy it brings.



## Understanding the World

We recently created a Teddy Bear's Hospital in Nursery. This was led by the children's own interests after some visits from the community nursing team. It has been wonderful to watch the children explore different roles and responsibilities and to act out experiences in a safe space. They have used existing knowledge to share their own understanding of procedures and practices in this environment.





# News from Reception

## Investigating Ice

The children were very excited by the brief amount of snow we had at school. Following this, the cold nights provided us with more exciting events... ice! The children were fascinated by the ice. They explored ways to melt and break the ice and rescue the stuck animals!



## Physical Development

This term the children have been continuing to develop their gross motor skills in a range of ways. We have been exploring the outdoor climbing equipment practising our balancing and climbing skills. They have enjoyed opportunities to practise their ball skills playing football outside. In the Reception area children have been using equipment to construct their own obstacle courses. They have been using the balance bars to develop their balance and control.





# News from Year One

## Health Week - Fruit Kebabs

The children have been learning about the importance of a healthy body, healthy learning routines and healthy minds. In our PSHE, DT and Science lessons, children have explored mindfulness activities and the benefits of a healthy diet. Children made fruit kebabs and thought about foods that are both kind and harmful to our teeth.



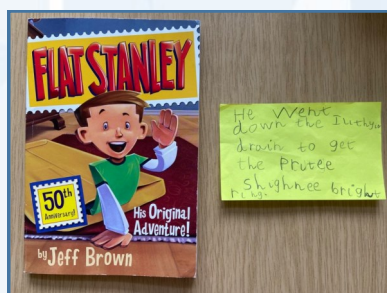
## The Arctic

The children have been comparing life in Felixstowe with life in an Inuit community. The children have studied the physical and human features of the Arctic and used this knowledge to design and make an Inuit sleigh. They used their knowledge of materials, studied in science, to design a warm outfit for an Inuit child. Their DT skills have been very impressive this term!



## Journeys and Maps in Year One

The children have been exploring journeys around the world using the story 'The Snail and the Whale' and the adventures of Flat Stanley. The children have been exploring mapping skills and looking at how continents on Earth are drawn as a map on a globe. We have been thinking about journeys that we take to travel on holidays and journeys that our letters take to arrive at their address. We have had a role play post office in our continuous provision. Next term we will embark on a Flat Stanley project with our letters travelling around the UK and beyond!





# News from Year 2

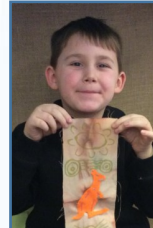
## Our Trip to Pipers Vale Gymnastics Center

To support our gymnastics lessons, Year Two were lucky enough to visit to Pipers Vale. They had a fantastic time trying out lots of different apparatus and activities. We were so proud of all of the children for testing out spring boards, balancing along the beams, climbing and swinging on bars.



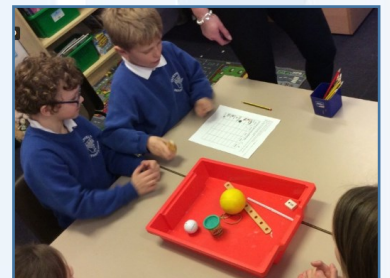
## Australia

The children in Year 2 have loved our Geography and Art sessions this half term where we have been learning about Australia. They have been really interested and enthusiastic learning about the differences in landscapes, physical and human features as well as the population and weather. They have enjoyed investigating the Aboriginal tribes and their culture. In Art the children have created different pieces of art inspired by the Aboriginal dot paintings and culture. They particularly enjoyed using tie dye techniques and sewing to create our final product.



## Science Investigations

Year 2 have been studying materials and their properties this half term. They have developed their knowledge and understanding of different materials and considered why materials are selected based on their properties. To extend this and develop our Science skills the children have worked in groups to design and carry out their own experiments to find which material is best for their chosen enquiry question. They even took their own photos and tables to record their results.





# News from Year 3

The children have been working hard to improve their Literacy and Numeracy skills this term. They have continued our Invaders and Settlers topic, learning about how the Romans changed Britain, which they all seem to be enjoying. Please may we ask that you continue to help your children at home with reading, revision of times table facts and spellings homework.

**Colchester Castle:** We had great fun looking around the museum. We had to investigate artefacts and learnt what they were used for. Next, we went down to the foundations of the castle and learnt how it was built on top of a Roman Temple and the story of the Romans and Boudicca. Finally, we took part in an activity where we learnt to build a Roman Villa and a Celtic roundhouse. It took a lot of communication and teamwork to build these successfully!



**Roman Day:** We had great fun getting dressed up as Romans. The children took part in a Roman banquet, performed their Roman dance and they learnt about aspects of what life was like as a Roman. Ask your children about some of the gruesome banquets! Thank you parents/carers for your support with their fabulous costumes.





# News from Year 4

Year 4 are continuing to enjoy their learning. They have been working hard in class on learning their timetables and of course practising lots on Times Tables Rockstars!

## Outdoor Learning

This half term has seen the start of a sequence of 8 Outdoor Learning sessions. The focus of these lessons has been to map and improve our different wildlife habitats. The children have made bird baths and identified the best locations to place bricks to encourage mini-beasts into the area.

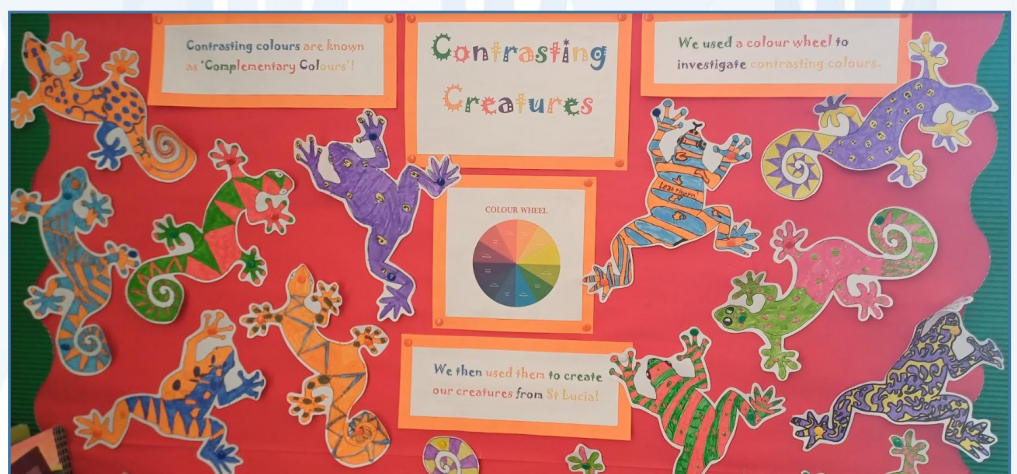


## Gymnastics

This half term we have been learning how to create sequences in gymnastics using rolls, balances, jumps and travels across the floor. We have used apparatus like A Frames, mats and benches.

## Art

Our focus in Art recently has been using a range of materials including oil pastels, wax crayons and Brusho to create the art of St Lucia.





# News from Year 5

## Author Visit: Zoe Antoniades

Reading is the gateway to learning anything about everything, and we continuously encourage our children to read, read, read! It was therefore an absolute pleasure to welcome a real-life author to our school in January. Zoe Antoniades is a published children's author, who read some of her stories with the Year 5 children and then shared her journey as to how she realised her dream of writing for others' enjoyment. Following a whole school assembly, Zoe then delivered workshops to each of the Year 5 classes in which she taught the children the process of how to develop an initial story idea.



## PE: Hockey, Dance and Outdoor Adventurous Activity

PE this half term has been Hockey for 5M and 5S and Dance for 5ST. In Hockey, the children have developed their knowledge of playing competitive team games by applying the principles of attacking and defending. They have learnt the rules of the game and had an opportunity to practise dribbling, passing and shooting. 5ST have been working with a Dance teacher to learn a routine which they will have an opportunity to perform later in the term. In addition, with Mr Ross, the children have been participating in a range of outdoor adventurous activities to develop and improve their team working skills.



## Outdoor Learning

In our Outdoor Learning session this half term, the children learnt about bird life cycles. They studied photographs of a range of birds and their nests, noting the difference between them. The children then built their own nests, imagining they were the birds and having to choose a safe place to build the nest away from predators, whilst selecting suitable materials from the school wildlife area.



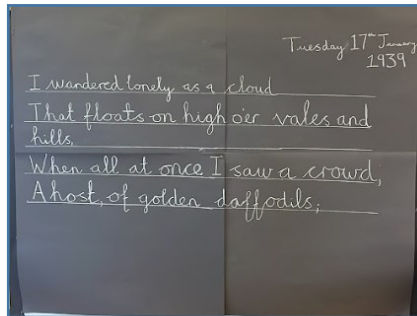


# News from Year 6

Year 6 are continuing to work hard and enjoy their learning, especially our World War Two Topic.

## World War Two Day

The children began their day with a long walk to the train station. One of the children explained, 'The train ride was loud and took ages to get to the countryside! When we arrived, the kind ladies of the village provided us with a drink and biscuit before we were then chosen by our billets.'

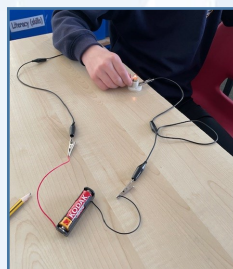
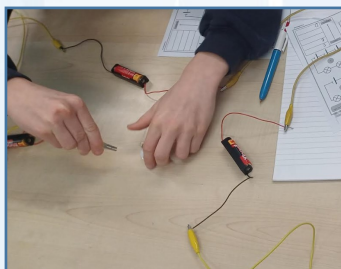
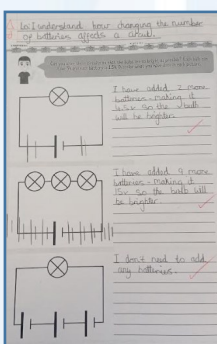
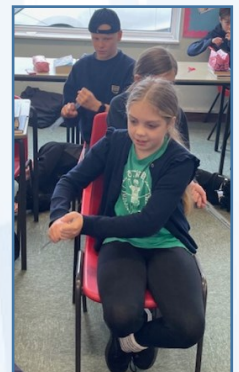


The school day included arithmetic, handwriting, dictation and reciting a poem. When an adult entered the room, the children were expected to show respect by standing until told to sit. At the end of the day, the children participated in 'drill' - exercises in lines. Throughout the day, there were a number of air raid warnings sounded.



## English

We have been looking at the story of The Little Ships, a story based on the evacuation and rescue of WW2 troops from the beaches of Dunkirk. We ordered the story, acted out scenes and then wrote our own version.



## Science

In Science this half term, we have been investigating electricity. We have learned the symbols used and drawn our own circuits as well as investigating the impact voltage has on the brightness of a bulb.



# What to do

## Advice on childhood illnesses



Go to school; if needed, get treatment as required



Some restrictions for school attendance



Don't go to school and see the GP

What it's called?	What it's like	Going to school	Getting treatment	More advice
Asthma flare up	Worsening of usual symptoms		Follow your care plan	Stay off school if feeling too unwell
Chicken pox	Rash begins as small, red, flat spots that develop into itchy fluid-filled blisters		Pharmacy	Back to school five days after on-set of the rash, or when all lesions are crusted over
Common cold	Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat		Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Conjunctivitis	Teary, red, itchy, painful eye(s)		Pharmacy	Try not to touch eye to avoid spreading*
Flu	Fever, cough, sneezing, runny nose, headache, body aches and pain, exhaustion, sore throat		Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene*
German measles/ Rubella	Fever, tiredness. Raised, red, rash that starts on the face and spreads downwards		GP	Back to school four days after the rash has started, if feeling well enough. Please let the school know, as pregnant members of staff may be affected.
Glandular fever	High temperature, swollen glands, sore throat; usually more painful than any before		GP	*
Hand, foot & mouth disease	Fever, sore throat, headache, small painful blisters inside the mouth on tongue and gums (may appear on hands and feet)		GP	Attend school while monitoring symptoms
Head lice	Itchy scalp (may be worse at night)		Pharmacy	
Impetigo	Clusters of red bumps or blisters surrounded by area of redness		GP	Back to school when lesions crust or 48 hours after start of antibiotics
Measles	Fever, cough, runny nose, watery inflamed eyes, rash		GP	Back to school four days from on-set of rash, and if feeling well enough
Ringworm	Red ring shaped rash, may be itchy, rash may be dry and scaly or wet and crusty		Pharmacy	
Scabies	Itching rash, commonly between fingers, wrists, elbows, arm		GP	Back to school after first treatment
Scarlet fever	Fever, unwell, red tongue, sandpaper rash		GP	Exclusion period during first 24 hours of antibiotics*
Shingles	Pain, itching, or tingling along the affected nerve pathway. Blister-type rash		GP	Only stay off school if rash is weeping and cannot be covered
Sickness bug/ diarrhoea	Stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea		Pharmacy	Contact GP if symptoms persist after 48 hours
Threadworms	Intense itchiness around anus		Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Tonsillitis/ Strep throat	Intense sore throat for more than 1 day		Pharmacy	See GP if temperature lasts more than 48 hours or cannot swallow. Only need to stay off school if feeling too unwell
Whooping cough	Violent coughing, with a 'whoop'		GP	Exclusion period during first five days of antibiotics
Covid				Visit <a href="https://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a> for latest guidance

\*Attend school while monitoring symptoms.

This information is a guide and has been checked by health professionals. If you are unsure about your child's wellbeing, we recommend you contact your pharmacy or GP to check.

Should my child go to school/nursery today?

Hertfordshire and West Essex Healthier Together for further information  
<https://www.hwehealthiertogether.nhs.uk/parentscarers>

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# Term Dates

## Current Academic Year: Term dates for 2023-2024

### Autumn term:

<b>Start of Autumn term:</b>	Wednesday 6th September 2023
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2023
<b>End of Autumn term:</b>	Wednesday 20th December 2023
<b>PD (non school) days:</b>	Monday 4th September 2023 Tuesday 5th September 2023

### Spring term:

<b>Start of Spring term:</b>	Thursday 4th January 2024
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 19th February to Friday 23rd February 2024
<b>End of Spring term:</b>	Thursday 28th March 2024
<b>PD (non school) day:</b>	Wednesday 3rd January 2024

### Summer term:

<b>Start of Summer term:</b>	Monday 15th April 2024
<b>May Bank Holiday:</b>	Monday 6th May 2024
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2024
<b>End of Summer term:</b>	Friday 19th July 2024
<b>PD (non school) days:</b>	Friday 12th April 2024 Monday 3rd June 2024

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## Next Academic Year: Term dates for 2024-2025

### Autumn term:

<b>Start of Autumn term:</b>	Wednesday 4th September 2024
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November 2024
<b>End of Autumn term:</b>	Friday 20th December 2024
<b>PD (non school) days:</b>	Monday 2nd September 2024 Tuesday 3rd September 2024

### Spring term:

<b>Start of Spring term:</b>	Tuesday 7th January 2025
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February 2025
<b>End of Spring term:</b>	Friday 4th April 2025
<b>PD (non school) day:</b>	Monday 6th January 2025

### Summer term:

<b>Start of Summer term:</b>	Wednesday 23rd April 2025
<b>May Bank Holiday:</b>	Monday 5th May 2025
<b>Half term:</b>	Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May 2025
<b>End of Summer term:</b>	Tuesday 22nd July 2025
<b>PD (non school) days:</b>	Tuesday 22nd April 2025 Friday 23rd May 2025