Weekly Learning Update

14th November 2025

Nursery

It has been another fabulous week in Nursery!

The children are busy practising their Nativity performance and are already very excited about the performances on Tuesday 16th December. They are remembering their dance routines wonderfully well. We are so proud of how hard they are working.

In Maths, we are focusing on the skill of touch counting. This is a method to support accurately counting a set of objects. Working as a class, the children are enjoying lining objects up, touching them individually and then counting one at a time.

In Phonics, we have been exploring the concept of body percussion, the ability to make different sounds and understand the sounds that are being made. We have been utilising a range of traditional tales whilst doing this.

Throughout the week, the children have been able to focus their fine motor skills with a range of cutting, rolling and mark making opportunities. Children have been exploring number and making patterns within the Maths area.

We have also had an ongoing project: the children have created some artwork as part of a '12 days of advent' project with Urban and Civic. Our 3 French Hens and 7 Swans Swimming are complete. It is in the process of being put together with a bigger collection, which will be on display. As soon as we have more information on where and when the display will be open, we will let you know! The children will be very excited to go with you to view their masterpieces.

Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

Reception have had another amazing week!

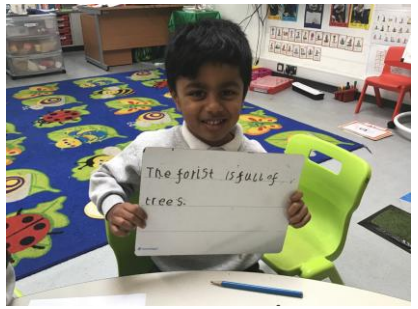
This week in phonics, we revisited the phonemes f, ff, l, ll and ss. The children have been working hard on blending for reading and segmenting for spelling — we are so proud of their progress! Next week, we will be assessing the children on their Phase 2 blending before moving on to Phase 3 phonemes.

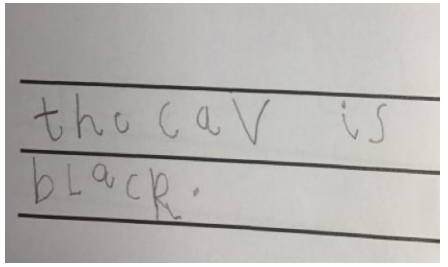
In English, we continued learning our story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. The children have enjoyed writing short sentences and phrases inspired by the story — it's been wonderful to see their creativity shine!

In Maths, we have been comparing quantities. We explored what the words more and less mean and used a variety of resources to help us compare different sets of objects. The children have shown great curiosity and understanding.

In P.E., we created a dance sequence linked to the theme *Under the Sea*. The children loved discussing the different sea creatures that live in the ocean and then expressing them through movement — from the gentle waves to fish, octopuses, dolphins, sharks and starfish!

This week in Expressive Arts, we began making our Christmas crackers for the Christmas Fair! The children had so much fun comparing different cracker designs, spotting festive themes and decorating their own templates.





Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

What an amazing trip we had to St John's House in Warwick on Wednesday! The children thoroughly enjoyed stepping back in time and immersing themselves in the Victorian era. They went to a Victorian schoolroom and learnt all about what life was like in Victorian Britain. They were put to work as servants and the lucky few were chosen to be the ladies and gentlemen of a rich household. We are so proud of how well the children joined in; they behaved brilliantly and demonstrated our school values in abundance!

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

Year 2 have worked really hard this week and we are really proud of the progress the children are making across the curriculum. We also officially started our nativity preparations this week!

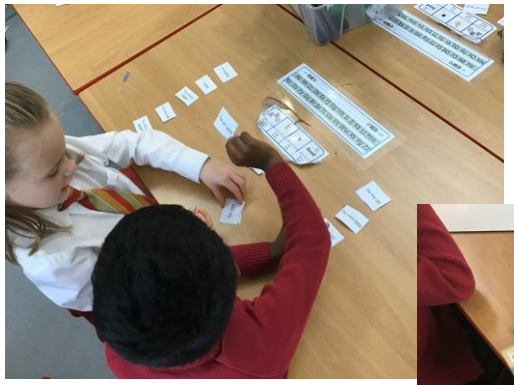
In English, we have focused on exclamations and using the past tense. We have applied our learning to parts of the book we have been reading, 'The Bear and the Piano' by David Litchfield. Next week, we are looking forward to writing a diary from the point of view of the bear and we took some time on Friday to explore an example of a diary.

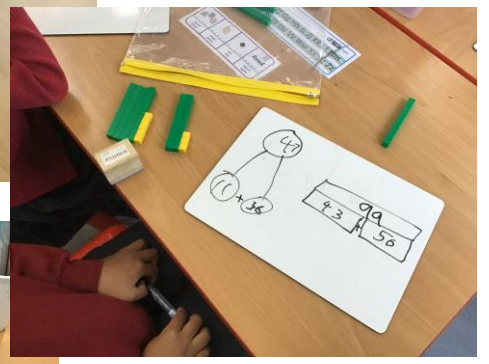
In Maths, we started the week by exploring how to add and subtract tens. We then moved onto adding two 2-digit numbers together. We used base ten to support our understanding and this was especially useful when we had a go at exchanging ones into a ten.

In DT, we were excited to design a hand puppet that we will be making later on this term. We had to choose an animal or a character. We then drew what we wanted it to look like and identified materials we would need to create them.

In History, we explored the key events of the Gun Powder Plot. We discovered that Guy Fawkes was caught with 36 barrels of gun powder under the Houses of Parliament, as he attempted the blow it up. The plan was unsuccessful! We enjoyed sequencing the events using a timeline.

Finally, we celebrated the Festival of Peace and Community this week. Braille Class enjoyed sharing their families with children in Anning Class, while Kerr Class were able to mix with Rauf Class to share their backgrounds. It was a real joy to see so much respect shown for each other and lots of children were excited to hear about different people's lives!





Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

It's been another brilliant week in Year 3!

In our English and Reading lessons, we have been enjoying The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis. We have spent some time predicting, visualising and asking questions, as well as exploring the features of a great narrative opening. We have focused on the use of dialogue within the book and thought about the rules of writing speech. The children enjoyed acting out conversations that the characters might have in the book, before having a go at writing their own speech sentences.

In Maths, we have been adding two three-digit numbers together involving an exchange. The children have shown amazing growth, remembering all of the steps!

In Geography, we started our new unit of learning on 'Our Local Area'. The children enjoyed exploring Digimaps to find human and physical features of Houlton. We discussed how Houlton has already changed and how it might change in the future.

In Science, we have been identifying the nutrients that humans need to have a balanced diet. The children created their own plates, classifying foods based on their food groups and the nutrients that they provide.

In PSHE, we discussed privacy and personal boundaries. We looked at different scenarios to help us to think about how to respect our own and other people's boundaries, as well as what to do if these boundaries are not respected.

A reminder that it is Malala's Celebration Worship next Friday 21st November at 10:15am. We hope to see you there!

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

It has been another busy week!

Our English learning this week saw us plan and write our instructions for the ultimate snowman. The children worked tremendously hard to include the skills we had been practising. There were bossy imperative verbs, there were time adverbials to help our reader follow instructions in the correct order and then they applied fantastic description with adverbs and adjectives so our instructions were crystal clear!

We also wore odd socks to show our support to Anti-Bullying Week on Monday!

We developed our understanding of the 3, 6 and 9 times tables in Maths this week. We used arrays and related facts to develop our skills within these times tables.

We celebrated the Festival of Peace and Community with Parks Class. We had a wonderful time sharing all about our families and what is important to us. It was amazing to see the joy and love that was on display between the children!

Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)

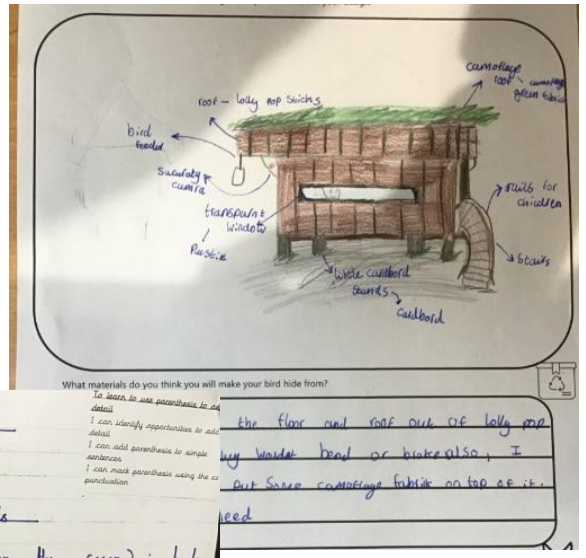
In Maths, we have started a new unit on fractions. The children have demonstrated a strong understanding of the roles of the numerator and denominator within a fraction. We have begun the unit by finding equivalent fractions using our knowledge of multiplication and division. This skill is greatly supported by rapid recall of times tables facts so please continue practising these at home using TTRS as it will make learning in school much easier.

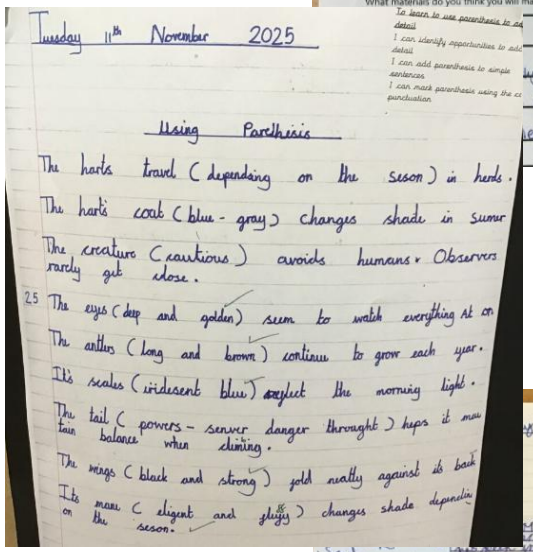
In English, we have been focusing on grammar skills in preparation for writing our information reports on *Impossible Creatures*. The children have learned how to use parenthesis (extra information within a sentence) and have worked hard to punctuate these correctly using commas, brackets or dashes. We have also concentrated on including relative clauses using words such as *who, whose, that, which, where* and *when*.

In DT, we began designing our own small-scale bird hides. The children ensured their designs met the criteria we created last week, including being waterproof, soundproof and camouflaged. They considered suitable materials and features such as windows. We are looking forward to practising the skills needed to construct our bird hides over the coming weeks.

In Music, we practised tongue twisters to help us articulate words clearly, using our tongue, teeth and lips. I wonder if the children can learn and practise a tongue twister at home to share in school?

In Science, we explored the different properties of the states of matter. This included learning how atoms are positioned in solids, liquids and gases. The children enjoyed physically acting out how atoms move in each state.





Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

In English this week, we have been exploring the use of dashes and how these can add extra information to a piece of writing. We have also discussed how dashes can avoid ambiguity and confusion for the reader. Next week, we are going to be writing a letter, so we have spent time discussing the features of a letter and generating ideas about life as an evacuee, which we can use in our writing.

In Maths, we have been adding and subtracting fractions. It has been important to make sure the fractions have the same denominator before we start to add or subtract. We have represented this using bar models to support our understanding.

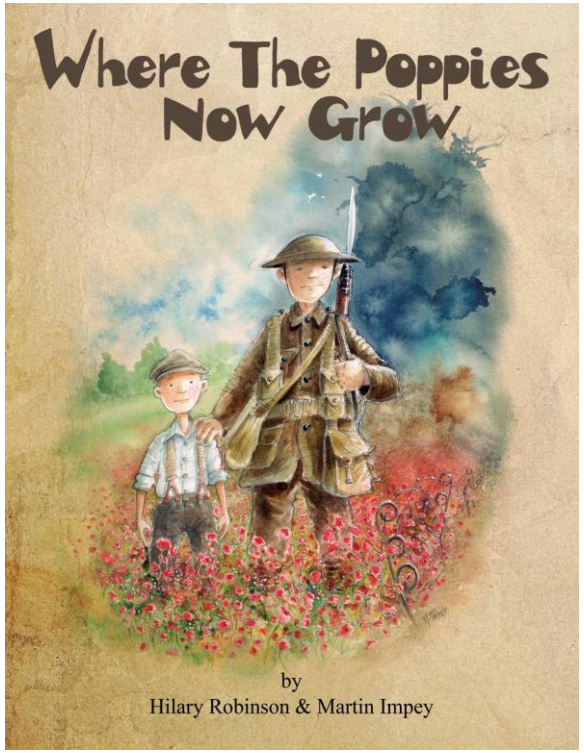
In RE, we have been celebrating our school's Festival of Peace and Community. We have really enjoyed working with the children in Bell and Windsor Class to share facts about ourselves, our families and communities we are part of. It was also lovely to speak to the Year 1 children and learn more about them!

In History, we have investigated Winston Churchill's 1940 '*We Shall Fight Them on the Beaches*' Speech. It was very inspiring to hear how passionate and motivational Churchill was for the people who lived in Britain during this dark time. We created freeze frames in groups to show how it might have felt to hear that. Then, we annotated his speech to make inferences and explain how it could have made people feel.

Collective Worship

During collective worship this week, we have been reflecting on Anti-Bullying Week. On Monday, we spoke about how our values align with Anti-Bullying Week:

- Individuality creates variety in our **Community**
- **Respect** and tolerance should be shown to others
- **Love** one another.



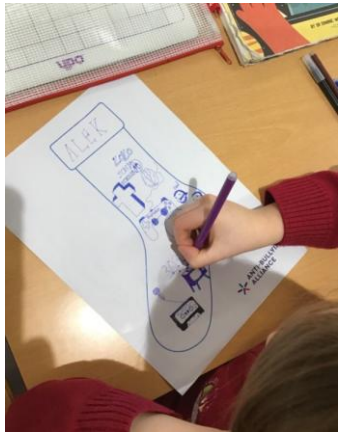
During Worship Through Story on Tuesday, we read *Where the Poppies Now Grow* to mark Remembrance Day. As we listened, the vivid illustrations and heartfelt narrative reminded us of the importance of peace, remembrance and hope for a better future.

This week, Pogson Class led Friday's Celebration Collective Worship. They shared with the rest of the school and our visitors the fantastic learning they have completed over the last few weeks across the curriculum. Well done, Pogson Class!

Collective worship at St Gabriel's always aims to be **inspirational** for all, **invitational** to all and **inclusive** of all.

Anti-Bullying Week

This week, we marked Anti-Bullying Week across the school. On Monday, we joined in with Odd Socks Day to celebrate the importance of individuality and to remind everyone that our differences should be respected and valued. The children enjoyed taking part and it was a wonderful way to highlight that love and respect make our school community stronger.



Festival of Peace and Community

On Thursday, different year groups across the school joined together to celebrate our Festival of Peace and Community. This was a special afternoon that allowed us to think about the importance of community, celebrating our backgrounds and differences. It was so wonderful to watch and listen to the conversations between children as they shared with each other stories about their families, backgrounds, talents and beliefs!

Recommended Reads

In honour of **Michael Rosen Day** yesterday, this week we want to celebrate one of the most loved and influential children's writers. Michael Rosen's poems and stories are packed with humour, rhythm and honesty and he has a remarkable ability to connect with children.

Whether he's making them laugh, helping them explore their feelings or taking them on an imaginative adventure, his work is always warm, relatable and full of life.

Here are a few of his wonderful books to enjoy this week...

Online Safety

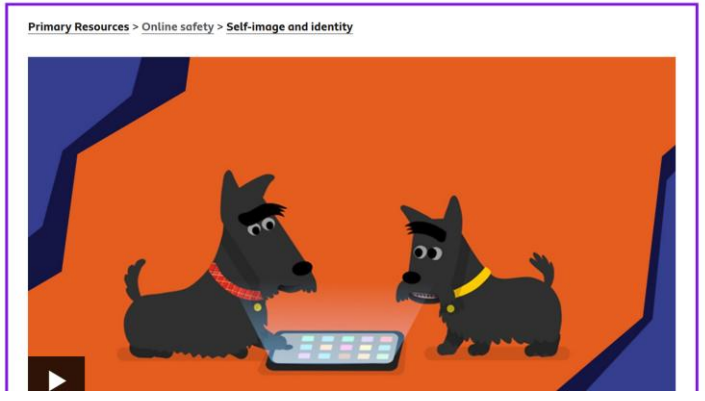
Online Gaming Profiles

When your child sets up an online gaming profile, help them keep their personal details private. Encourage them to use a fun nickname instead of their real name and never include information like age, school or home address. If the game asks for a profile picture, choose something like an avatar or a favourite character rather than a photo of your child. Make sure privacy settings are turned on and remind them to come to you before sharing anything online. A quick check together can make gaming safe and fun!

Refer to BBC Bitesize for more top tips and information about online gaming. There are videos to share with your child in order to help them set up their gaming profiles safely.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/articles/zy87ywx

How to stay safe when setting up gaming profiles



Maths Problem of the Week

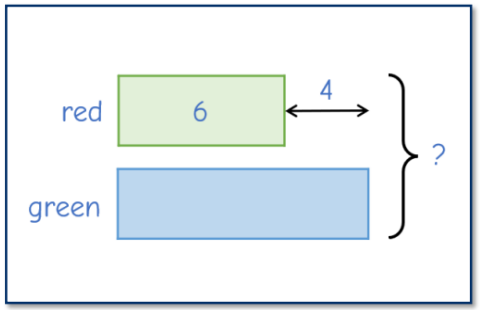
KS1

1 Jo has some red socks and some green socks.

She has 6 red socks.

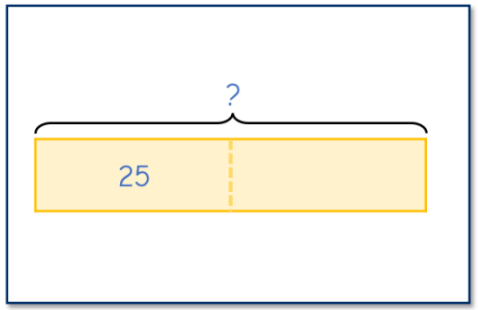
She has 4 more green socks than red socks.

How many socks does she have in total?



2 Sam thinks of a number.

What is Sam's number?

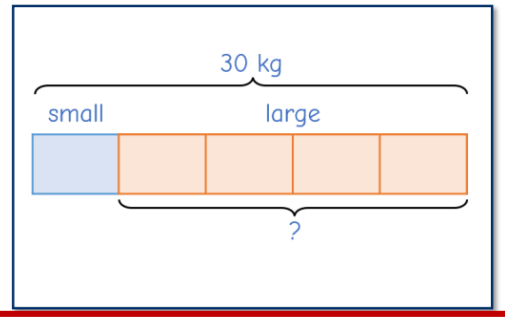


KS2

3 A large gift box weighs four times as much as a small gift box.

One large gift box and one small gift box together weigh 30 kg.

How much does one large gift box weigh?



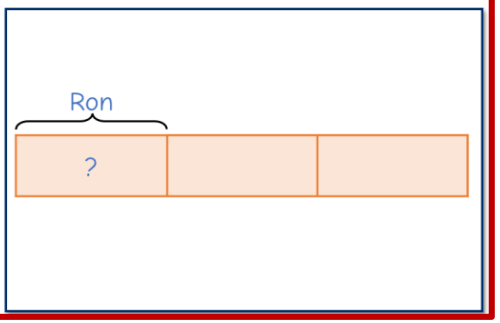
4 Ron, Whitney and Mo sell biscuits.

Ron sells $\frac{1}{3}$ of the biscuits.

Whitney sells 40% of the remaining biscuits.

Whitney sells 24 biscuits.

How many biscuits did Ron sell?



Challenge

5 Alex and Dexter have £86 in total.

They each spend £7

Alex now has 25% more than Dexter.

How much more money did Alex have than Dexter at the start?

Answers

1. Jo has 16 socks in total.
2. Sam's number is 50
3. A large box weighs 24 kg.
4. Ron sold 30 biscuits.
5. Alex had £8 more than Dexter.

Community Events

We are accepting donations of pre-loved items, in good condition, to be sold on the day, including:

- Books (for all ages)
- Toys
- School uniform

Are you able to donate a prize for our raffle or know someone who could? Perhaps a product, voucher or service?

We also have stalls available for local businesses to sell their products.

Please complete the form below to offer support during the event or in preparations leading up to it.

Christmas Fair Support – Fill in form

Thank you in advance for supporting our fundraising efforts, which will contribute towards enrichment opportunities for the children.

Autumn Term 2: Key Dates

Thursday 20th November: Year 5 & 6 Reading Event
This will take the form of a mini escape room, where you and your child will work together, using problem-solving, reading skills and book knowledge to solve puzzles and crack codes. This will take place at 4:15pm and will finish by 5:30pm.

Friday 21st November: Malala Celebration Worship

Thursday 27th November: Wreath Making Workshop
Proceeds from the event will contribute towards providing further enrichment opportunities for the children.

Friday 28th November: Tagore Celebration Worship

Thursday 4th December: Christmas Fair
Please join us at our Christmas Fair, between 3.30 and 6pm. If you are able to support with running a stall, please get in touch.

Friday 5th December: Braille Celebration Worship

Wednesday 10th December: Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner Day

Friday 12th December: Attenborough Celebration Worship

Tuesday 16th December: Nursery and Reception Nativity

Wednesday 17th December: KS1 Nativity
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Supervision on the Playground

At the beginning and the end of the school day, please ensure that children are closely supervised by parents or carers on the playground.

We kindly ask that children do not play on the equipment before registration and after dismissal.

For everyone's safety, children should remain in close proximity to parents and carers at all times and must not leave the school gates without an adult nearby.

If your child is scooting or cycling to school, we strongly encourage them to wear a helmet. We also ask that children do not ride their scooters or bikes on the site.

Thank you for your support in keeping our school community safe.

Whole School Attendance	
Attendance since September	96.2%
This week's attendance	96.5%
Latest Local Authority ranking	74th of 196 schools
Latest National ranking	Top 30-40% of schools

Advent Attendance Award

Weekly Draws: Each week during December, one child from each class who has attended school every day that week will be entered into a draw to win a book of their choice.

Grand Draw: Children who achieve full attendance for the whole of December will be entered into a special draw for another chance to win a free book.

Whole school target is 96%

National research shows, on average, children who meet expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics have higher attendance than those who did not.

Please contact the school for support and advice if you are concerned about your child's attendance.

NHS England has provided helpful guidance for parents and carers when making the difficult decision regarding not sending a child to school.

NHS guidance- Is my child too ill for school?

Family Support

This week's Family Information Service newsletter includes information about:

- Warwickshire Libraries - What's On Guide
- Smartphone safety and cyberbullying webinar
- Money Advice Market

and much more!

Worried About a Child?
If you have concerns that a child is suffering any form of abuse, neglect or cruelty, contact the Warwickshire Children and Families Family Connect immediately by calling 01926 414144.
Lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm.

If you need to get in touch out of usual office hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team immediately by calling 01926 886922.

If you think that a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by calling 999.

Santa's coming to The Barn, Houlton!

Bring the family for a magical festive visit December 12–14

Enjoy the sparkle, smiles and special memories with Santa himself.

Book now to avoid missing out: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/houlton-events-team-112714681141

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