Weekly Learning Update

13th November 2026



Nursery

What another wonderful week Nursery have had! The children have continued to enjoy a range of exciting learning experiences both in our focused teaching sessions and throughout the provision. This week, our small group learning has focused on Maths, with a particular emphasis on touch counting. Our activities have been inspired by Bonfire Night, Diwali and People Who Help Us, with a special focus on the role of the police.





<u>The children have been busy exploring all areas of our Nursery provision!</u>

Maths: This week, the children have been developing their touch counting skills through a variety of practical activities. Our maths area has had a police theme, with children counting objects and placing the correct quantity into numbered police cars and attaching a number of pegs to match a number on police hat pictures.

Writing and Fine Motor: The children have been exploring Mehndi patterns by tracing over pre-drawn designs on hand templates or creating their own detailed patterns and marks. This has encouraged careful control and early mark-making skills.

Fine Motor Area: The children have enjoyed arranging coloured lolly sticks to create firework patterns and shapes, carefully matching them to printed challenge cards. This activity promoted concentration, hand-eye coordination and problem-solving.

Role Play: Our restaurant continues to be a firm favourite. The children have been confidently taking on the roles of chef, waiter and customer, developing their communication, language and imaginative play skills.

Sensory Area: The playdough table has been themed around fireworks and Mehndi patterns. The children used their hands to manipulate the dough and create their own designs.



Investigation Area: The children have been fascinated by our light box, exploring translucent coloured paddles and blocks. They have enjoyed investigating colours, shapes and how light shines through different materials.

Creative Area: To celebrate Diwali, the children have been making beautiful paper plate diya lamps. They carefully decorated their creations while learning about this special festival of light.

Small World Area: Our small world play has focused on *People Who Help Us*, particularly the police. The children have been creating their own stories and scenarios while learning more about how police officers help keep us safe.

Outdoors: There has been lots of exciting learning taking place outdoors this week. The children have enjoyed a roll-the-dice mark-making activity, drawing the corresponding marks on whiteboards. We have also introduced a *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* themed small world area, linking to the traditional tale characters featured in our story focus, *Each Peach Pear Plum*. Other popular activities have included colour sorting, glitter mark-making with paintbrushes, mud kitchen play, and imaginative performances on our stage area using a range of dressing-up costumes.



The children have shown fantastic enthusiasm and engagement throughout the week. It has been wonderful to see them making links between celebrations, stories and real-life experiences while developing their confidence, independence and curiosity every day. ✨

Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

It has been another fantastic week, filled with lots of learning and opportunities to explore continuous provision.

English:

We have been creating whole class story maps to support retelling our key text of We're Going on a Bear Hunt. As we do this, the children have been gaining confidence in sequencing the story as well as recalling the main events. Alongside this, the children are writing sentences linked to the events within the story.

Phonics:

We are continuing to consolidate our knowledge on phase 2 phonemes. With a focus on blending for reading and segmenting for spelling, the children have enjoyed applying their prior learning.
Thank you for your support with listening to your child read. Hearing the children read in school, it is clear they are working hard with decoding and practising their phonics skills at home.

Maths:

The children have explored the mathematical concept of comparison. This week, the children have compared quantities, to identify more and less.

RE:

The children have accessed a range of activities to support our whole school's Interfaith week and the Festival of Peace. With a range of art inspired projects and learning opportunities reflecting on the importance of light and how light is used as imagery to symbolise hope and growth, the children have had lot of conversations and opportunities to show empathy and understanding of others world views.

Reader 2

Phase 2

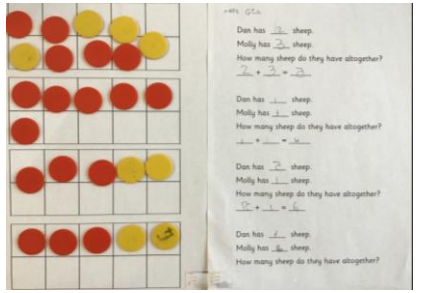
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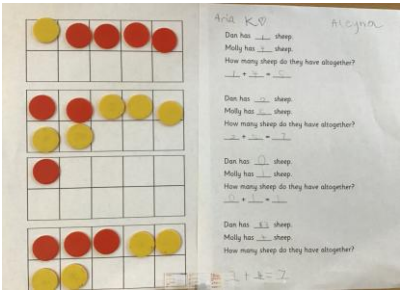


Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

English

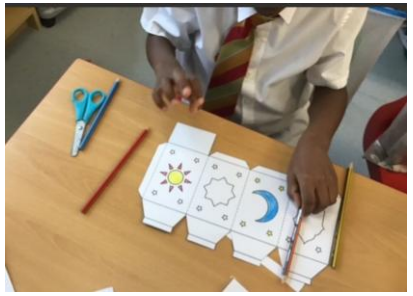
In English, we have begun planning and retelling the story of *Rapunzel* by Bethan Woollvin. The children have been planning and writing their own versions of the story, carefully applying their sentence rules and phonics knowledge to support their writing. So far, we have planned and written the opening and build-up of the story, focusing on using capital letters, full stops and sounding out words independently. We are very impressed with the children's growing confidence and creativity as writers.





Maths

In Maths, we have continued adding and subtracting within 10. The children have used a range of practical and pictorial representations to deepen their understanding, including ten frames, counters, number lines and part-whole models. We have focused on finding the missing part in addition problems and explaining our mathematical thinking. The children are becoming much more confident in using different strategies to solve problems.



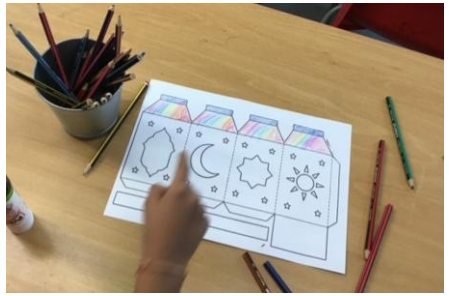


RE

As part of Interfaith Week, we celebrated the **Festival of Peace**. The children explored the significance of light in different religious worldviews and discussed how both light and darkness are necessary parts of our lives. They reflected on the things that bring light, hope and guidance to them. To celebrate their learning, the children decorated and made their own lanterns and drew pictures of people, places and experiences that bring light into their lives.







History

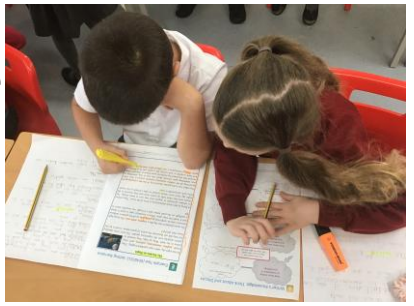
In History, the children have recapped the terms **past** and **present** and related these concepts to their own lives through discussion and comparison. We have also begun learning about the life of **Queen Victoria**, exploring important milestones from her long reign and beginning to understand why she is remembered as a significant figure in British history.

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

We have had a great week of learning this week across the curriculum.
In Maths, we have been learning to add 2-digit numbers across 10. We started by using concrete resources, which helped us to see and manipulate the numbers physically. We then moved on to pictorial representations, which supported us in making the connection between the practical equipment and the written method. This is an important step in helping us build a secure understanding before next week, when we will begin working in our books with more independence.









In English, we have delved further into our text, The Night Gardener. In Grammar, we have focused on using expanded noun phrases and ly words to improve the quality of our writing. We have also started planning our final text, carefully incorporating some of this language into our ideas so that our writing is more detailed and effective.

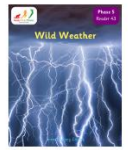


In History, we learned about the events of the Gunpowder Plot and then put the events into chronological order. This helped us to understand the sequence of events more clearly and develop our historical knowledge.

In Design and Technology, we started the process of creating our own puppets by investigating existing products. We thought carefully about the user and the purpose of each product, as well as how the products were made. We also considered the materials, joining methods and finishing techniques used. This will help us when we begin designing and making our own puppets.



Reader 43
Phase 5
Wild Weather



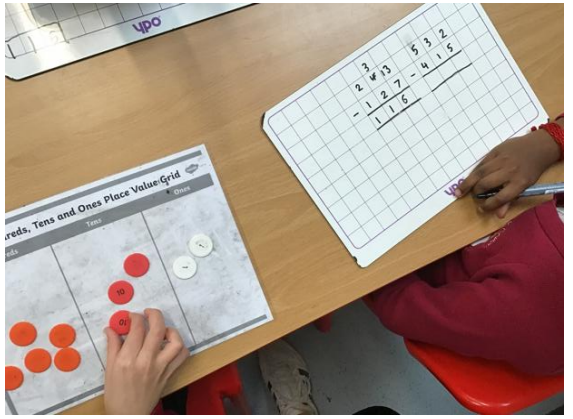
Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)



Year 3 have had another busy and enjoyable week!

In English, we have been learning how to use inverted commas accurately in our writing and how to add the suffix -ly to adjectives to create adverbs. We have also been exploring the key features of fable narratives and using these to deepen our understanding of the genre. The children enjoyed writing detailed character descriptions of the magpie and the fox, carefully choosing vocabulary to bring the characters to life.

In Maths, we have been focusing on addition and subtraction using the column method. The children have been subtracting 3-digit numbers from 3-digit numbers, including calculations that require exchanging from the tens or hundreds columns. We have also been learning how to add and subtract 2-digit numbers to and from 3-digit numbers, applying our understanding of place value to solve increasingly challenging calculations.



In Geography, we began our new topic, Our Local Area, with a focus on investigating change over time. Using the iPads and Digimaps, the children compared a historical map of Houlton with a modern Ordnance Survey map. They worked hard to identify human and physical features and discussed how different parts of our local area have changed over time, as well as how they may continue to change in the future.

This week, we also took part in activities linked to the Festival of Peace. We talked about how we can "light the way" for a shared future and considered the ways we can be a guiding light for others through friendship, kindness, helping others and creating a strong sense of community. The children then worked creatively to produce shadow puppet shows that illustrated how one person's actions can have a positive impact on someone else's life.



We were also incredibly fortunate to be presented with our very own dictionaries by the Rotary Club in Collective Worship this week. Each child has been gifted a dictionary to keep and use throughout their time in Key Stage 2, all the way through to Year 6. The children were excited to receive them and have already enjoyed exploring their new resource. We know these dictionaries will be invaluable in supporting spelling, vocabulary development and independent learning in the years ahead.

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

Another busy week with lots of learning and growth has flown by! In our English learning this week, we have been hard at work developing our description skills. We have used the beautiful illustrations from our class book 'Leaf' to inspire us too! We have learned about how to use a variety of fronted adverbials, personification and prepositions and how this can add extra detail that allows our reader to immerse themselves into our stories.





In Maths, we have deepened our knowledge of the 6 and 9 times tables. We have learned about related facts and how these can unlock the other facts within our division, repeated addition and repeated subtraction.

During our science learning this week, we used drama as a method to develop our understanding of the different states of matter and the behaviour of the particles within them. We asked questions about what we would like to know and shared what we knew already.





We had a delicious Design and Technology lesson this week as we were able to take part in a sensory evaluation where we tasted a variety of breads. This allowed us to think about the different compositions of each bread and how we would like to develop our own bread product by the end of the half term!

We have really enjoyed the Festival of peace this week! We learned about how light symbolises different things amongst different organised worldviews. Light overcoming dark and good overcoming evil was a key theme that ran through all of the worldviews we learned about. We then created lanterns with the different concepts we learned as beautiful illustrations to decorate it.





Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Raúf Class)

Week 2 has come and gone incredibly quickly!
In English, we have been focusing on how writers use language to create mood and atmosphere and evoke emotions within their readers. The children have spent time planning and writing their own setting and character descriptions, using a particular image from our class text as inspiration. We have explored how carefully selected vocabulary and descriptive techniques can influence the way a reader imagines a scene or responds to a character. We finished the week by beginning to generate ideas that we will use to support our planning and writing next week.

In Maths, we have begun our new topic on fractions. This week, we focused on developing a secure understanding of what fractions represent and the different parts that make up a fraction. We then explored equivalent fractions, using visual models alongside more formal strategies to identify and calculate fractions with the same value.

In Science, we have continued our exploration of the solar system, using secondary sources of information to investigate the different orbital and rotational periods of each planet. The children researched how long each planet takes to rotate on its axis and orbit the Sun before comparing the results. This allowed us to explore the fascinating differences between the planets and consider how these differences affect the length of a day and a year on each one.

In History, we have been finding out more about life within the Ancient Greek civilisation. Using an online historical resource, the children researched a range of different aspects of Ancient Greek society, including education, marriage, slavery and philosophy. They then used their research to think critically about how life in Ancient Greece might have been similar to or different from life today. We also considered the influence Ancient Greek civilisation has had on the modern world and identified some of the ways in which its ideas and practices continue to shape aspects of our lives today.

In PSHE, we have been exploring the brain and its important role in recognising, understanding and managing our emotions. The children learned about several key areas of the brain, including the amygdala, prefrontal cortex, anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and insula, and explored the different roles they play in how we respond to emotional situations. Having developed an understanding of how these areas help us recognise and process emotions, we then considered some positive strategies we can use to manage feelings and respond appropriately in different situations.

Finally, in DT, the children have been developing their initial designs for their very own bird hides. After looking at a range of examples, they began thinking carefully about how they might structure and construct their own designs, considering the different features that would make their bird hides effective. The children produced their own initial plans, which will act as a starting point for the next stage of our project. In the coming weeks, we will be exploring different techniques for joining pieces of wood before beginning to bring our designs to life!

Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

It's been another busy and creative week in Year 6 with lots of exciting learning across the curriculum!

In **English**, we explored the language and structural features of a flashback narrative. The children investigated the writer's choices, discussing why certain techniques had been used and the impact they have on the reader. We also explored how authors switch between past and present tense to clearly separate events from the past and present-day action. The children showed great maturity in analysing the text and explaining how these features help make a flashback narrative engaging and effective.

In **Maths**, we focused on adding and subtracting fractions, including mixed numbers. The children used a range of methods to support their understanding, including bar models**,** number lines and their knowledge of number facts. They applied these strategies to solve increasingly challenging problems and explained their reasoning clearly when discussing solutions.

In **Science**, we explored reflection as part of our learning on light. The children investigated how light travels in straight lines and reflects off surfaces, allowing us to see objects. We discussed how the angle at which light hits a surface affects the angle at which it is reflected and identified examples of reflection in everyday life.

In **RE**, we enjoyed celebrating our Festival of Peace. The children wrote thoughtful poems linked to the themes of light and darkness, reflecting on hope, peace and kindness. They also contributed to our whole-school art project, creating some beautiful pieces that linked to the festival's theme.

In **Art**, we continued learning about Roman Halter, exploring his life, influences and artistic style. The children reflected on how his experiences shaped his artwork and developed a deeper appreciation of the messages and emotions behind his pieces.

Well done, Year 6, for another fantastic week of learning. The effort, enthusiasm and thoughtful discussions shown throughout the week have been wonderful to see!

Signals Class

This week, our theme has focused on The Colour Monster, with a special emphasis on the feeling of happiness.

The children explored lots of different experiences that can make us feel happy. We talked about things such as blowing bubbles, feeling soft and fluffy objects on our cheeks and hands, listening and moving to upbeat music, jumping on the trampoline and playing chasing games with our friends. These activities helped the children recognise and experience happiness in fun, meaningful ways.

Throughout our provision, the children had many opportunities to explore this emotion through a range of sensory activities. They enjoyed filling the Happiness Colour Monster with different materials using tweezers and brushes, helping to develop both fine motor skills and emotional understanding. The children also used Play-Doh to create their own Happiness Colour Monsters and explored loose parts to make their favourite characters and creations.

One of our favourite Bucket time activities this week was Dancing Raisins! The children watched Mrs Evans pour raisins into a bottle of lemonade and watched them dance up and down as the bubbles lifted them. We linked this exciting activity to our happiness theme, discussing how the raisins looked as though they were dancing joyfully.

In our listening sessions, the children continued exploring environmental sounds through their interest in Peppa Pig. They were extremely successful at listening to, identifying and reacting to different sounds, showing fantastic engagement throughout the activities.

During phonics, the children have been learning to distinguish between words that begin with the sounds 't' and 'p'. They explored a variety of objects from our initial sound bags and worked hard to sort and identify items by their beginning sound. We were really impressed with the children's growing confidence and enthusiasm when joining in with these activities.

The children have also continued to consolidate their understanding of numbers through practical activities linked to less than 10, developing their confidence with counting and comparing amounts.

We have had a wonderful week full of smiles, laughter and learning. Thank you for your continued support.

Have a lovely weekend!















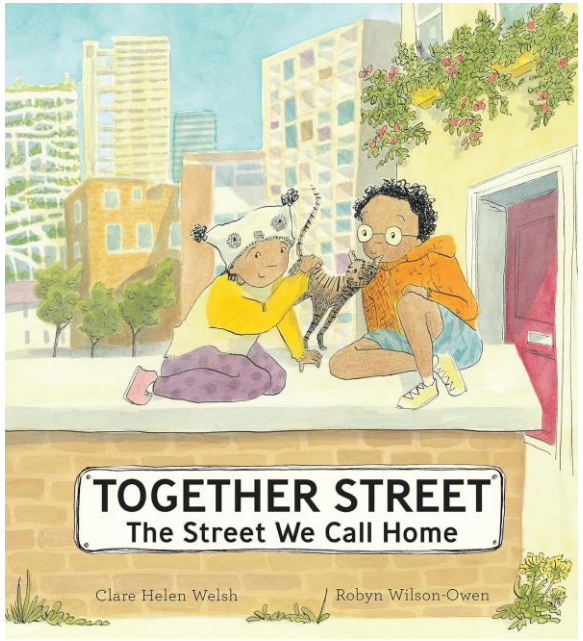


Recommended Read

Together Street: The Street We Call Home By Clare Helen Walsh

Ash takes Nell on a walk along her new street, meeting neighbours in all their different homes. But something unusual is going on - what can the surprise be?

This joyfully illustrated picture book celebrates friendship, community and belonging.



Online Safety

Check out the Gaming Hub on the CBBC website for a range of games, activities and resources linked to your children's favourite TV shows. This is a safe and fun way for children to explore gaming while learning valuable tips about online safety.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/topics/gaming



Outstanding	**100%**	190 days of full learning All lessons complete
Very Good	**98%**	186 days of learning 4 days and 20 lessons missed
Good	**96%**	182 days of learning 8 days and 40 lessons missed
More needed	**94%**	178 days of learning 12 days and 60 lessons missed
Concerning	**92%**	174 days of learning 16 days and 80 lessons missed
Very concerning	**90%**	171 days of learning 19 days and 95 lessons missed

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?

Collective Worship



This week, we're continuing our focus on kindness and, linking to World Kindness Day. Mrs Garner has challenged the children to do 'one kind thing' to make a difference to someone else.

Rugby Rotary Club came to visit us on Wednesday this week and very kindly gifted each child in Year 3 their very own dictionary which will follow them in their educational journey. We are very grateful for their generosity and the children are excited to use their dictionaries!

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

Key Dates

Friday 20th November – Turing Class Celebration Worship (10.15am-10.45am)

Thursday 26th November – Wreath Making Workshop (6.00pm)

Friday 27th November – Attenborough Class Celebration Worship (10.15am-10.45am)

Thursday 26th November – Wreath Making Workshop (6.00pm)

Friday 27th November – Attenborough Class Celebration Worship (10.15am-10.45am)

Friday 27th November – Christmas Fair (3.30pm-5.00pm)

Monday 30th November- Beauty and the Beast Christmas Panto



Thursday 3rd December to Tuesday 8th December – Book Fair (3.30pm-4.00pm daily)

Thursday 10th December – Christmas Jumper Day

Tuesday 15th December – EYFS Nativity (10.00am and 2.00pm)

Wednesday 16th December – Christmas Dinner Day

Thursday 17th December – KS1 Nativity (2.00pm and 5.30pm)

Friday 18th December – Children finish at 2pm. No Angels afterschool club.

ST GABRIEL'S CHRISTMAS FAIR

FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMBER



GAMES
RAFFLE
GIFTS
FOOD AND DRINK
AND MORE!

3.30-5PM



Christmas Wreath Making

26TH | NOV | 6 PM

St Gabriel's C of E Academy,
Houlton

£45 per ticket, including all supplies, a welcome drink and festive treat!

To secure your place, please contact
office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

Family Support

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

•World Adoption Day
•Teenage Markets
•Best Start in Life

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.

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