

Burbage Junior School Newsletter-

February 2025



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Executive Headteacher's message



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of a short but busy half term, I wanted to take a moment to share some of the wonderful experiences and achievements of our pupils.

A highlight of this term has been our Forest School sessions, where some of our Year 4 children had the opportunity to engage with nature through bird spotting, creating bird feeders and den building. It was fantastic to see their enthusiasm for outdoor learning and their teamwork in constructing shelters.

Another inspiring moment was when some of our Year 4 children have shown courageous advocacy. They took the lead in organising a mini cake sale to raise money for their chosen charities. Their commitment and dedication to making a difference in the community have been truly commendable, and we are incredibly proud of them.

We are also pleased to share that our new class teacher, Mrs Adshead, will be joining us earlier than expected and will begin teaching 4B on 31st March. In the meantime, Mr Jones has been doing a wonderful job and we are grateful for his hard work and dedication. Similarly, Mr Wheat has been providing excellent teaching and support in 5L.

Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome parents to our upcoming Parents' Evening during the week commencing 10th March. This is a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress, and we encourage all parents to attend.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a restful and enjoyable half-term holiday. We look forward to seeing the children refreshed and ready for another exciting half-term ahead.

Best wishes,

Mrs Zoe Driver

Executive Headteacher

New School Dinners

We are pleased to inform you that after a thorough selection process, our school will be introducing a new school dinners provider, ABM, starting after the Easter break.

As part of the selection process, the school council were invited to a tasting day, where 3 companies brought examples of what meals they could provide. The food was great- I don't think many of us ate our lunch that day! However, at the end of the process there was a clear winner with the school council almost unanimously voting for our new provider ABM.

ABM is committed to providing fresh, healthy, and delicious meals for our pupils. The new menu will include a salad bar with a variety of choices and a hydration station.

Further details, including menus and meal options, will be shared soon.





SEN update

Managing Your Child's Worries

We invite you to join our **School Nurse Information Session on Managing Your Child's Worries**. This session will help you understand childhood anxiety and provide practical strategies to support your child's emotional well-being.

Topics will include:

- ✓ **What makes a child anxious?**
- ✓ **Recognising early warning signs of anxiety**
- ✓ **How to help your child manage worries in a positive way**

📅 **Date:** Monday 17th March

📍 **Location:** Burbage Junior School

🕒 **Time:** 9:15am

This session will offer valuable insights into childhood anxiety and equip you with effective tools to build your child's confidence and resilience. Our school nurse will be available to answer any questions and provide tailored advice.

If you would like to attend this session, please complete the online form using this link <https://forms.office.com/e/JWUcJwTFJ> or the QR code by 7th March.



Senior Mental Health Lead: Supporting Your Child's Wellbeing

At Burbage Junior School, we are committed to ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils. To strengthen this commitment, we have a **Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL)** who plays a key role in promoting a positive and supportive environment for your child.

Mrs Lucas is the Senior Mental Health Lead for Burbage Junior School.

What is a Senior Mental Health Lead?

The Senior Mental Health Lead is a trained member of staff responsible for overseeing mental health support within the school. Their role is to develop and implement strategies that support pupils' emotional wellbeing and to ensure that mental health is a priority within our school community.

What Does the Senior Mental Health Lead Do?

Supports Pupils: Works closely with pupils who may be struggling with their mental health and ensures they have access to appropriate help.

Supports Staff: Provides training and resources to help teachers and staff recognise and respond to mental health concerns.

Works with Parents and Carers: Offers guidance and support to parents and carers who may have concerns about their child's mental health and signposts them to additional resources.

Creates a Supportive Environment: Helps to build a school culture that promotes emotional resilience, self-care, and mental health awareness.

Connects with External Services: Works alongside mental health professionals, counsellors, and external agencies to ensure students receive the support they need.

We believe that mental health is a partnership between school and home. If you have concerns about your child's wellbeing, you can reach out to **Mrs Lucas** for advice, resources, or to discuss any support available within the school.

Together, we can help ensure every child thrives both emotionally and academically.

For more information or to speak with our Senior Mental Health Lead, please contact Mrs Lucas on Class Dojo or call on 01455 630970



Fidget Toys

We have seen a rise across school in children bringing in sensory toys for the classroom. Fidget and sensory tools are tactile objects that are small enough to be discreetly kept in pockets or hands. They are designed to aid focus and concentration.

Some children in school need to use fidgets to help them to learn. If your child needs a fidget, we will happily provide this. In school we are finding that for children who do not need them, these objects are causing distraction and disruption to themselves and others.

Why use a Fidget?

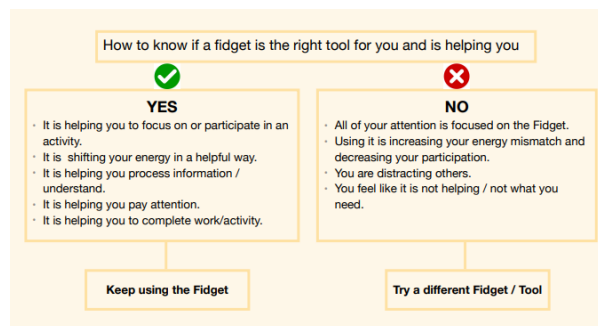
Fidgets can be used to help children to focus on and more easily participate in activities. For a fidget to become a tool instead of a toy children need to understand how they work and how they help them.

When to use a Fidget?

Their energy doesn't match the energy they need to participate.

For example:

- They need help to focus and pay attention.
- They need to settle or calm body their or mind.
- They need to touch or hold something.



Thank you for your support with this. As always, we are always looking at the best way to support the children and their learning.

Young Voices Concert



Finally it had arrived, the day we'd all been waiting for- and believe me it didn't disappoint. All our hard work learning words, melodies and actions came together as we joined our voices with 5000 other children. We were lucky to see performances from Tommy Blaize (Singer from Strictly Come dancing) 14 year old soul singer, Souparnika Nair and our choir's favourite, MC Grammar.

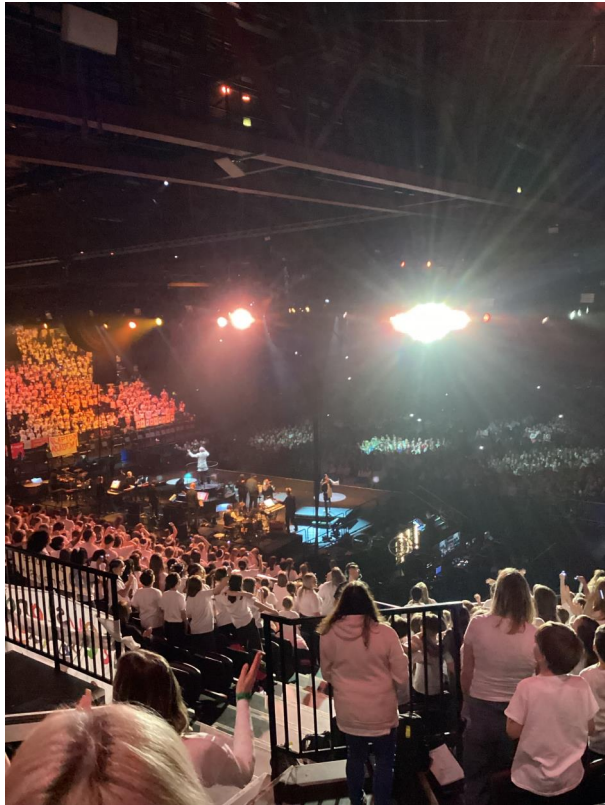
It was fantastic to be able to see Urban Striders performing their dances to our songs and encouraging the children to add their own moves. Time for the performance came and the children received their special torches. The effect was amazing!

It was a long day of singing, but the whole choir sang their hearts out. All of our staff were so proud of each and every one of them, not only for their beautiful singing, but also their outstanding behaviour.

Thank-you to parents for all their support in these events and thank-you to the staff who accompanied us on the day

Mrs Melanaphy





Competition Winners

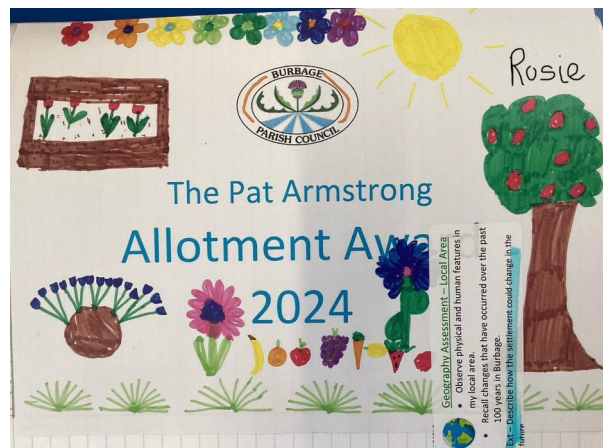
Way back in September our Year 3 pupils entered a competition, set by Burbage Parish Council, to design a plaque for the winner of the 2024 Pat Armstrong Allotment Award.

Out of all the schools that entered the competition, we are thrilled to announce that Rosie in 3G was one of 2 winners and Blake in 3G was runner up.

Well done to our 2 budding designers. Both pupils and their family have been invited to attend an awards ceremony at the Annual Parish Meeting to receive their prize and certificate.

If you would like to see their excellent designs, they will appear in the Parish Council's February newsletter and in The Local Rock villages edition due to be distributed from Monday, 17th February.

Congratulations Rosie and Blake, we are so proud of you.





Children's Mental Health Week



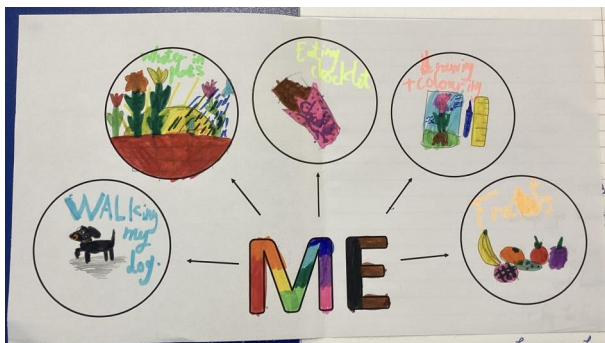
Children's Mental Health Week 2025 has focussed on the theme **'Know yourself, Grow yourself'**

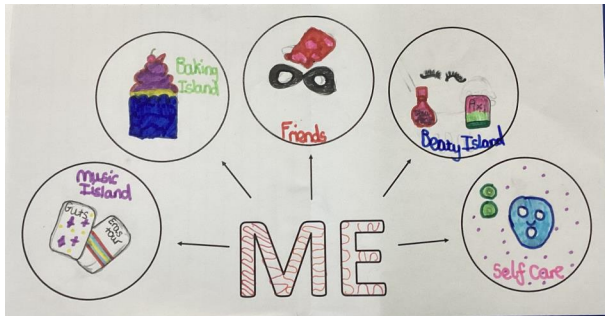
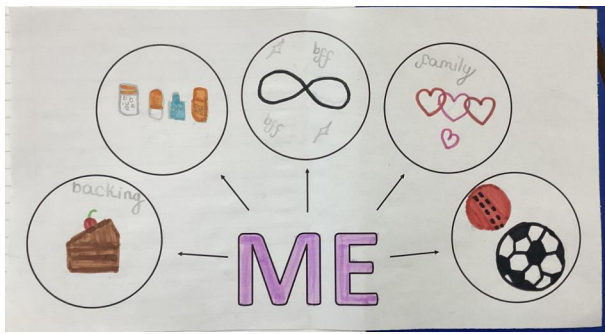
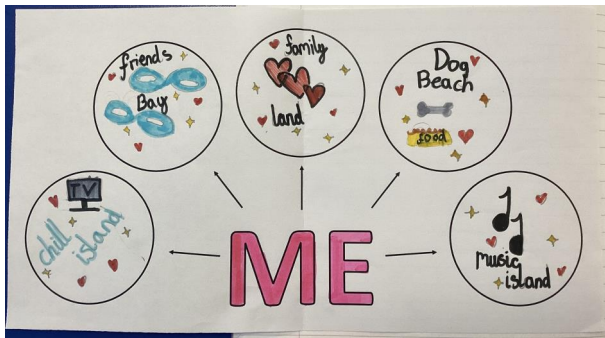
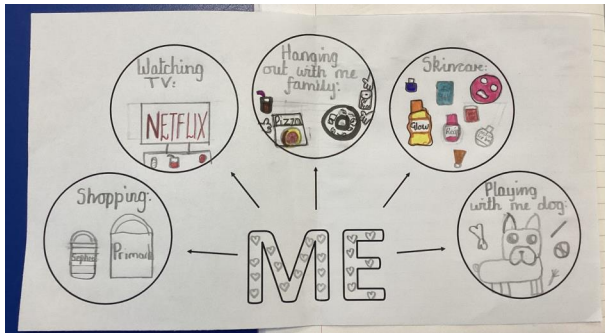
The aim of the project was to use the characters of Pixar's *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*, to encourage children and young people across the UK to discover how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop. Classes talked about when we take notice of ourselves and how we feel, we are able to make better choices and be more connected with our feelings and behaviours. Noticing these feelings can help us recognise when we need support.

Pupil's have watched a clip of the Disney Film, 'Inside Out' and had discussions about what their own Personality Islands might be. They then completed an art project to show and celebrate aspects of their personality. We then finished the week with a triumphant 'Dress to Express' day, where children could wear whatever they chose to show their personality.









Safer Internet Day



Safer Internet Day took place on Tuesday 11th February.

Pupils have taken part in a specially designed lesson with the focus being this year's theme of **'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'**

The organisers, saferinternetday.org.uk have compiled parental information on this subject, which you may find helpful.

Tips for Parents and Carers: Keeping you and your loved ones safe online

This Safer Internet Day we are starting a conversation about how to spot, respond to and report all types of scams online. Scams can take many forms and may target anyone, including young people. Use these top tips to keep you and your loved ones safe online.

Enjoy going online together and talk regularly about your family's online lives

The internet is amazing and can help us all to access information and entertainment. Spend time online with your child to understand how they are using technology and talk together about the good and the bad parts of being online. Talk about your own experiences and find other opportunities to get the conversation started, like stories in the news. Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything that they see or experience online.

Take online security measures seriously

The internet can be a tool used by criminals to target their victims, but a few [simple steps](#) can help keep you and your accounts secure. Use [strong and separate passwords](#) for online accounts and [set up two step verification](#) (2SV) where it's available. You may also be

able to [set parental controls](#) to prevent unwanted online purchases and limit children's access to harmful content.

Look out for warning signs that someone or something online cannot be trusted

"It just seems too good to be true!" – Other common signs of a scam include contact that you weren't expecting or being asked for money or personal information (think: bank or contact details, passwords, or phone numbers). Scammers use [other tactics](#) to manipulate their victims into paying, like playing with your emotions, or building a sense of urgency so you are rushed into making a decision. If you aren't sure it's reliable, don't risk it.

Remember that anyone can be a victim of a scam

Scammers are good at what they do and will target anyone. We all need to stay vigilant and support those who are most vulnerable including children and the elderly by helping them recognise what to look out for. If anyone in your family has been scammed, talk openly about it. There should be no shame in being victim to a scam and it's never your fault.

Know where to get help if something goes wrong

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam online, you're not on your own. Help is available and you are not to blame for what has happened. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, you can report fraud and cyber crime online to [Action Fraud](#) or by telephoning 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, report to Police Scotland by calling 101. You may also be able to report via social media, if the scam has taken place there or to another relevant organisation, like your bank, if you think your account is at risk.

Remember, if you or anyone else is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately.

More support around this can be found on the Safer Internet Day website.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2025>

Sports Update

We have had a relentless couple of weeks for sporting events here at Burbage Junior School.

It started with our Year 6 Basketball team coming second place in the area finals.

Our Year 5/6 Boys football team also collected second place in the 'schools series' tournament.

Our Year 4/6 New Age Kurling team came third overall in their KS2 competition, but they also gave huge encouragement to our Year 2's at the Infants school, helping them win the KS1 event .

We travelled to the Leisure Centre to compete in the big annual year 5/6 Indoor Athletics event, where we once again finished 2nd out of 14 schools, just missing out by a few points to the eventual winners.

I took our year 6 girls football team to their 'schools series' tournament, where they brought home the winners trophy, winning all games and conceding 0 goals .

A massive well done to Mrs Bright and our Gymnastics teams on both qualifying for the next round. Our level 4 team came first and our level 3 team came second. It was also lovely to see our children support Mrs Dymant's Year 2 team during the event!

Another big congratulations to our Year 3 children who have taken part in the cross country events this year. Both the boys and the girls accumulated the most points to win first medals as a team. We are very proud of you all.

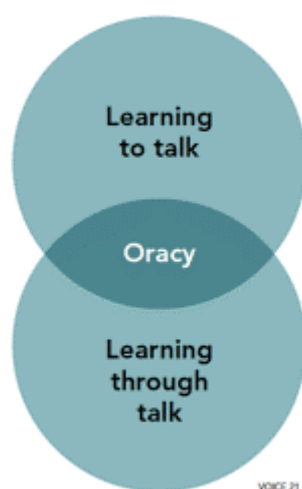
And lastly thank you to all our Year 4/5 children who took part in last weeks 'Personal Best' festival. We had such a fun morning including archery, obstacle course and speed bounce.

We are always immensely pleased with all our children's efforts and attitudes towards our sporting events. They represent our school with the upmost respect and dignity. We could not be prouder of their achievements and I am one lucky PE teacher to have such great kids to work with.

Thank you to all the parents for your support as always #teamburbage



Oracy at Burbage Junior School



At Burbage Junior School, we are fully focused on developing the oracy skills of our pupils.

Oracy is all about how we talk and listen to others. It's like learning to use our voices and ears to share ideas, understand each other and work together. Just as we learn to read and write, it's important to learn how to speak clearly and listen carefully.

When we practise oracy, we focus on four key areas:

- 1. Physical:** This is about how we use our voices and bodies when we talk. Speaking loudly enough for everyone to hear, using clear pronunciation, and making eye contact are all part of this.
- 2. Linguistic:** This involves the words we choose and how we put them together. Using the right words and forming proper sentences help us express our thoughts clearly.
- 3. Cognitive:** This is about organising our thoughts and explaining our ideas in a way that makes sense. It includes asking questions to understand better and summarising what we've heard.

4. Social & Emotional: This area focuses on how we interact with others. Taking turns when speaking, listening actively and being aware of others' feelings are important skills here.

By practising these skills, pupils become better at sharing our ideas and understanding others, which helps them learn and make friends more easily.

How you can help at home.

Helping your child become a confident speaker and listener is important for their learning and social skills. Here are some simple ways you can support your primary-aged child's oracy development:

1. Talk About Their Day

Encourage your child to share details about their school day. Instead of asking general questions like "How was school?", try more specific ones:

- "What was the most fun thing you did today?"
- "Did you learn something new? Tell me about it."
- "Who did you play with at break time?"

These questions can help your child open up and practise expressing themselves.

2. Read Together and Discuss Stories

Reading with your child is a great opportunity to talk. After reading a story, ask them questions:

- "What do you think will happen next? How do you know?"
- "Why did the character do that?"
- "How would you feel in that situation?"
- "What sort of person do you think this character is? How do you know?"

This not only improves their understanding of the story but also encourages them to think and talk about different ideas.

3. Introduce New Words

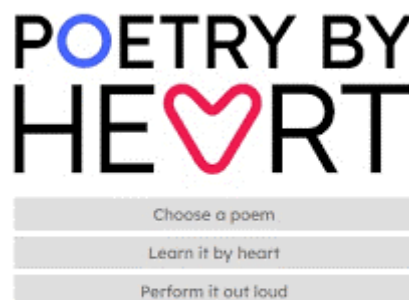
Help your child learn new words by introducing a "word of the day." Use the new word in sentences and encourage your child to do the same. This can make learning new vocabulary fun and helps them use a richer language when speaking.

4. Limit Distractions During Conversations

When talking with your child, try to minimise distractions like mobile phones or TV. Giving them your full attention shows that you value what they have to say and encourages them to express themselves more.

By incorporating these practices into your daily routine, you can help your child develop strong speaking and listening skills, which are essential for their success in school and beyond.

Poetry by Heart Competition



This is a national competition that we are entering again this year; it is a great initiative that develops our pupils' oracy skills.

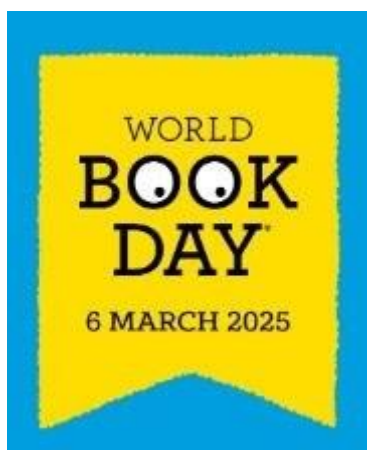
Your child will have chosen a poem at school to learn-off-by-heart and perform, either individually, in pairs or threes.

They need to rehearse the poem so they can recite it and perform it in front of their class – the week beginning 3rd March. Each class will vote for their favourite performance and the grand final will be held in our World Book Day assembly on Thursday 6th March.

For more information about Poetry By Heart, see their website:

<https://poetrybyheart.org.uk/>

World Book Day



World Book Day Celebrations

We have several book-related activities planned for this year's World Book Day on **Thursday 6th of March** and in the week leading up to it:

- **Poetry By Heart Grand Final.** Families of the class winners will be invited to attend our special World Book Day assembly at 9:10 on the 6th March in the hall.
- Children may come to school on World Book Day **dressed as a character from a children's book** (not a film).
- **A librarian from Creative Learning Services** will be visiting the Year 5 and 6 classes to share new books with them on World Book Day. Another librarian will book- talk new fiction to the Year 3s on Tuesday the 4th and to the Year 3s on Wednesday the 5th.
- We are organising the **Great Burbage Book Swap** to be held in school on World Book Day. Pupils need to bring a book (maximum of 3) from home -that they are prepared to swap - into school after half term. For each book they will receive a token, entitling them an alternative book on the 6th of March.
- Pupils will be **"buddy reading"** with a pupil in a different year group on World Book Day. We would like each child to bring into school their favourite book, with a chosen page(s) to read to their linked pupil.

We look forward to celebrating reading together at BJS on this special day!

Year 4 Cake Sale



In January, some of our year 4 children approached Mrs Driver asking if they could organise a bake sale in aid of charity.

The children worked hard to organise the event and liaised with Mrs Melanaphy to advertise the sale. With Mrs Wood supporting on the day, it was a resounding success. The girls did excellently, providing all the cakes (thank-you parents!) setting out their stall, interacting with their customers, taking in the money and providing change. The girls managed to raise a fantastic **£136!!!**

This will be split between an animal rescue charity and a cancer charity.

What an amazing achievement! Well done to our young people for such a thoughtful and well organised event.

Year Groups- Curriculum Update

Year 3

Another fantastic half term for Year 3!

In English, the children have been writing a battle speech as if they were Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe. The children really enjoyed getting into character for this and re-enacting her speech in groups. We definitely have some budding thespians amongst us!

We have also spent time reading 'Boudicca Strikes Back', a book about her rebellion against the Romans, and have just started 'Pebble in my Pocket' to align with our Science unit on Rocks and Soils. We have learnt a new Good Reader Strategy of skimming and scanning and have enjoyed playing fastest finger first to put this skill to the test!

In Science, we have enjoyed doing lots of investigations into Rocks and Soils. We have tested rocks for their hardness and permeability, have observed sedimentation to find out about

the composition of different soil types and have learnt about the different types of rocks and how they are formed.

Design and Technology has been great this half term. The children have enjoyed doing a cooking unit where they made pastry tarts using seasonal vegetables. They worked in groups to taste test certain seasonal fruits and vegetables and then they collaboratively designed their own tart. I think it is fair to say that their favourite lesson was the tasting and evaluating lesson!

In Music they have been furthering their learning about notes and their value, developing their skills on the glockenspiel, and are now learning 'The Dragon Song', which is a song all about kindness, respect, friendship and acceptance. They have also been responding to music using their improvisation skills.

Art has been fantastic this half term as the children have been junk modelling! (Thanks again to everyone for all the cardboard donations!) They have learnt how to turn 2D shapes into 3D structures by using different joining techniques such as slotting, tying and folding. They have studied the work of Sir Anthony Caro and have used this as inspiration to create their own 3D abstract structures. The work they have produced has been fantastic and very creative. It has also been an excellent opportunity for them to work on the group work skills and communication.

We have been fortunate enough to enjoy a trip out this half term. The children visited a mosque in Leicester to support their Islamic studies in RE. This trip was really enriching as it allowed them first hand experience of what it is like to be inside a mosque. The behaviour on this trip was excellent and we are really proud of them!

To support our History studies on the Romans, the children enjoyed a Roman Day. This was so much fun and a fantastic opportunity to learn about Roman way of life and battle formations. The costumes were amazing and the children thoroughly enjoyed being Roman for a day!

The children's work in Maths has been amazing this half term. They continue to work really hard and try their best in these lessons, using manipulatives to help them visualise new concepts. We have finished our multiplication unit and have now moved onto length and perimeter.

Keep up the hard work Y3; you're doing fantastically! We look forward to another fun-filled half term after a well-deserved break!

The Year 3 Team





Year 4

What a great start to 2025! Mr Jones joined 4B and has enjoyed getting to know all of the children.

The children have experienced a wealth of opportunities this half term including weekly Swimming lessons and Forest School sessions. The adults leading these sessions have shared how well the children have thrived.

We have been 'Going for Gold' in Mastering Number sessions in order to learn our multiplication facts and the children have loved quizzing each other each day. This has led to improved scores on Times Tables Rockstars.

As part of our World Book Day celebrations, the children have selected a poem to learn and will perform this in front of the class at the start of March.

Numerous children have proudly represented the school at sporting events such as Dodgeball, Kurling and Gymnastics. A few children were even chosen to take part in trials for the Swimming gala.



Year 5

This half term, we have been extremely busy in English. We began the half term looking at the poem 'The Highwayman' by drawing story maps and creating freeze frames. We have then linked English to our history topic 'What was life like in Tudor times?' and created a biography based on Richard 3rd , a recount of the Battle of Bosworth and it will conclude with a newspaper report after half-term.

In Design and Technology, we have created truss bridges by accurately measuring and sawing wood and using glue guns. We have also learned about the digital world and thought about how a micro:bit can be used as a sensor to alarm us when an animal is too hot or cold. We have built cases for the micro:bit out of Lego and then designed them using CAD.

In Science, we have looked at reversible and irreversible changes by completing experiments such as melting chocolate and butter.

We thoroughly enjoyed our trip to Bosworth Battlefield where we took a tour around the exhibition, understood what it would be like to be a soldier and followed their journey into battle.

What a great end to the first term in Spring!

We hope you all have a restful February break!





Year 6

Year 6 have had another busy half term. The children are doing really well; most are keeping up with homework and becoming more independent. We can see they are almost ready for high school!

In maths, we have been studying ratio and algebra. These are new topics for them and they have coped so well with these challenging concepts.

English this term has focused on the Victorians: the children have written an informal account of a child labourer's day and a diary and an alternative ending for The Little Match Girl story. We are now working on writing with greater formality, including a workhouse report and a persuasive speech.

We have finished our topic about Evolution and Inheritance in science and have started work studying Electricity.

In DT, we have created mechanical automata, designed to be used in shop windows to entice buyers inside. We were so impressed with their technical skills (particularly sawing) and their creative flair.

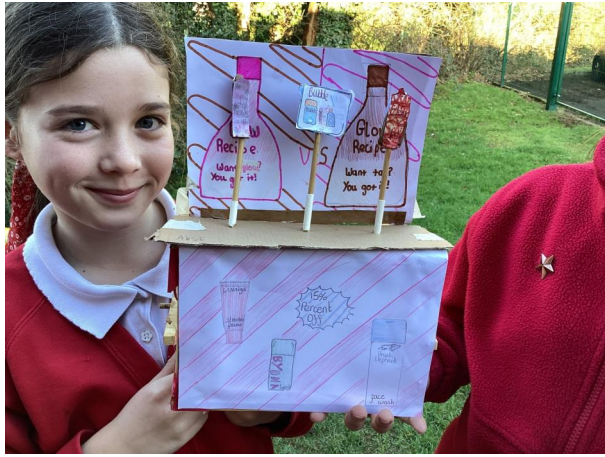
We all enjoyed a trip to The Warning Zone recently. Whilst there, the children learned about keeping safe online as well as how to avoid and manage potential dangers in the real world. These skills are so important as more and more of our Year 6 children are walking to school without parents and have more freedom outside of school.

Thank you to those of you who have signed up for this year's residential to Beaumanor. The office have now set up a payment plan. We will send out kit lists soon and will hold a meeting prior to our visits: 6-7pm on Wednesday 21st May.

A reminder that SATs week is Monday 12th – Thursday 15th May.

Have a lovely half term break and thanks again for your continued support.









Message from the PTFA



Next term we're thrilled to announce the return of egg rolling! The children absolutely love it, and this year we are running the event free of charge so that all the children can take part! They'll be yummy chocolate treats for the winners, plus a little something for everyone to wish them Happy Easter from the PTFA.

I would like to remind you that the position of PTFA Chair will be available when I step down at the AGM in October.

The PTFA can't run without a Chair so it's really important that we find a replacement, and it would be great to get someone to shadow me over the next few months ready to take over.

We run a really successful PTFA that raises around £15,000 per annum to be spent at our two wonderful schools on items that enrich the children's learning.

It's a really rewarding role so if you are interested please email me so that I can answer any questions, or meet for a chat to explain what's involved.

Hope you all have a great half term break.

Nicky Thorington

PTFA Chair

Upcoming Dates

Monday 24th February- School opens for Spring Term 2

Wednesday 26th February- SEND review meetings

Thursday 27th February- SEND review meetings 5L

Tuesday 4th March- Year 5 – Visitor from a Synagogue (in school)

Wednesday 5th March- Share our learning session in your child's classroom. 3.30pm- 4pm

This is an opportunity for you to join your child in their class to share their work so far this term

Thursday 6th March- World Book day

Wednesday 12th March- Parents' evening 3.30-.8.00pm (Not 5L)

Thursday 13th March- Parents' evening 3.30- 5.30pm

Friday 14th March- Parents' Evening 5L

Tuesday 18th March- Year 4 Historic Workshop (in school)

Wednesday 9th April- PTFA Egg rolling

Friday 11th April- School closes for Easter Holidays

Monday 28th April- School opens for Summer Term