

**Nest, Nursery and Reception Nursery Rhymes.** It was lovely to see the children singing their nursery rhymes this morning and having so many parents in enjoying watching. they did really well, and made us all very proud.



**Parents meeting with Mr Fisher:** Last week a number of you came in to meet me at the end of the day. It was an informal event and a pleasure to meet more of you. This is something I would like to do more of as I believe developing our school community is of benefit to us all. If a different time of day would work better for you, please let Sarah know and I will see what we can do. I was able to share some of our priorities:

- continuing to develop a curriculum that ensures that all children all make good progress in literacy and numeracy and are prepared for their next stage in education. This includes a focus on learning and remembering important knowledge including the vocabulary.
- Develop our teaching so that strategies that assist the children to focus and engage in deep thinking are used throughout the day.

Plus some good news about work that is being planned for the New Year to replace the windows and external aspect of the school, making it more energy efficient and a visually smarter school that we can value and take pride in.

I would also like to address other site issues and a clean-up and renovation of our Forest School are on my priority list and we could do with some help. I have asked parents to suggest how this could work and whether this could be a weekend event, or during a half term to maximise involvement and also to end with a picnic or barbeque or something similar. Some parents suggested they would use the year group parent’s WhatsApp groups to gather ideas then send them to Sarah at the office. Please do share your suggestions and ideas. I would like us all to feel involved and to feel proud of our school.

We recognise that all of the adults in school are role models in many ways and one way is that of continuous learners . We have had a number of experts working with us recently, developing our curriculum and teaching. One specific curriculum area is Gymnastics and the teachers and children have enjoyed lessons each Monday



**SAFE**

We move around school in a safe manner. We follow instructions to keep ourselves safe. We keep hands, feet and uniform tidy to ourselves. We use equipment safely. We stay safe online. We talk to an adult if we feel unsafe.

**READY**

We wear correct uniform. We arrive at school on time. We have our equipment ready. We show that we are listening and ready to learn.

**RESPECT**

We listen when others speak and we respect the property of our friends and the school. We have an understanding of others' cultures and beliefs. We respect that everyone has a right to learn.

Type of query	Member of staff to contact
Safeguarding/child protection	Mr Fisher, Mrs Cracknell, Miss Borgeat, Mrs Poole and Mrs Richardson
Any issues relating to your child or another child in the class	Email admin to arrange a meeting, sometimes a phase leader may join this meeting
If you do not feel the issue has been resolved or you may need more advice.	<p><b>Step 1</b> Phase Leader</p> <p>EYFS-Miss White Year 1 - 3- Mrs Christman Yea 4 - 6 -Mr Chandler</p> <p><b>Step 2</b> Deputy Headteacher Mrs Hannah Cracknell</p> <p><b>Step 3</b> Headteacher- Mr Fisher</p>
Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs	Miss Borgeat
Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Mrs Cracknell
Payments/Finance	Miss Byrne Mrs Tilbury
Admissions	Miss Byrne
Complaints	Please refer to school complaints policy on the <u>website</u> .

# Upcoming Events

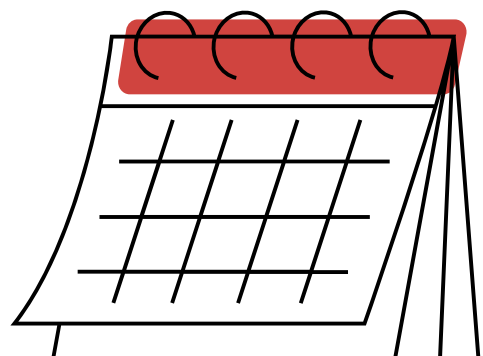
2025  
2026

## November

Wednesday 19th	Cinema trip Year 4 / 5 and 6
Wednesday 19th	Cinema trip Reception
Wednesday 19th	Movie morning Nursery and the Nest
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Inset Day - School closed
Thursday 27th	Cinema trip Year 1 / 2 and 3

## December

Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 2nd	Book fair
Tuesday 2nd	Decorations day
Thursday 11th	Y6 Carol singing at Carleton Court 7:15pm
Monday 15th	Rock Steady Concert
Friday 19th	Tales together



# Christmas Dates



Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December - Years 1 / 2 and 3 Christmas play. 2pm



Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December - Years 1 / 2 and 3 Christmas play. 9am



Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December - Whole School Pantomime



Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December - Year 4 / 5 and 6 Carols 2pm



Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December - EYFS and The Nest Sing and Sign 9am



Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> - Year 4 / 5 and 6 Carols 9am



Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December - Christingle Time to be confirmed



Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December - Whole School Christmas Dinner



# Online Safety

A meme (/mi:m/; MEEM) is an idea, behavior, or style that spreads by means of imitation from person to person within a culture and often carries symbolic meaning representing a particular phenomenon or theme.

Memes are everywhere - quick, witty, and wildly shareable. For many young people they are more than jokes, they're a way to connect, express themselves and interpret the world. But behind the humour, there can be risks: misinformation, insensitive jokes and permanent digital footprints. The following National College guide highlights the potential pitfalls of meme culture.

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MEMES

Memes may look like simple jokes, but, for many teenagers, they form a shared cultural language. Quickly created and reworked, they spread across social media platforms as images with text or short videos. Nearly eight in ten teenagers share memes (79%, YPulse), making them part of daily life. While memes encourage creativity and participation, they can also spread misinformation or reinforce harmful stereotypes.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- SPREADING MISINFORMATION**  
While memes help to communicate complex topics, they can also spread misinformation. Memes may sometimes include content presenting false facts or biased viewpoints, especially around health, politics, or current events and, as they're designed to be shared quickly, young people may not question their accuracy.
- EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**  
Memes are widely circulated, and not always age-appropriate, meaning young people may encounter explicit language, sexual content, or graphic imagery, even without searching for it. As memes spread fast on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or WhatsApp, it's nearly impossible to filter them completely.
- MASKED MESSAGES**  
Some memes are designed to be confusing or layered with hidden meanings, making them hard for parents, and, sometimes, other young people to understand. Online groups often create these memes to look like inside jokes, but they can sometimes conceal offensive, harmful, or misleading content.
- HIDDEN HARMS & LOSING SENSITIVITY**  
When serious topics like violence, racism, or mental health are turned into jokes, children and young people may become less sensitive to these issues over time. While a funny meme may seem light-hearted, it can carry messages that belittle certain groups, encourage risky behaviour, or mock personal struggles. Repeated exposure through memes can make harmful behaviour seem normal or less important. Over time, this can blur their understanding of what is funny versus what is discriminatory, harmful, or damaging to themselves and others.
- PERMANENT DIGITAL FOOTPRINT**  
Unlike spoken jokes, memes leave a trail. Created or shared memes can resurface later and be misunderstood, even if intended as harmless. Once online, memes may be copied, saved, or spread beyond a young person's control - digital actions can follow them into their future, shaping how they are perceived by peers, teachers, or even employers long after the original meme has been shared.



# Advice for Parents & Educators

## ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS



Talk regularly with young people and try to understand their online world - discuss what they find funny about the memes, and why. By listening without judgement, you build trust, making it easier for them to come to you if they see something harmful. Open conversations also help children and teens think critically about the messages behind memes rather than simply accepting them at face value.

## MODEL HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



Show children and teens positive online behaviours, such as taking breaks from screens, avoiding late-night scrolling, and engaging in offline activities. Setting clear routines around screen time at home can help to reinforce healthy boundaries and reduce the risks of overuse. By modelling balanced technology use, adults can help children and young people see that digital entertainment, including memes, should be just one part of life.

## TEACH DIGITAL LITERACY



Help children and young people learn to question where information comes from and whether it's reliable - developing media literacy skills prepares young people to understand and navigate through their future online lives. Show them how memes can sometimes exaggerate or misrepresent facts for laughs, and encourage them to check credible sources when memes claim to present truth.

## FOSTER EMPATHY ONLINE



Remind children and young people that memes should never come at someone else's expense. Encourage them to think about how a meme might make another person feel before sharing or creating it. Highlight examples of positive memes that celebrate creativity without hurting others. Fostering empathy, respect, and kindness in digital spaces will help them become more aware of promoting a safer, more supportive online culture.

# NO OUT SIDERS

There are No Outsiders at Hollybush.  
Everyone is welcome in our school.  
No one is the same, but everyone is equal.

In our assemblies in the last two weeks we have covered:



We're all winners!

This photo went viral over summer. It shows a boy standing on the winner podium and wearing a medal after winning a race.

The winner invited his competitors to stand with him on the top place and put his arms around each to make sure they didn't fall off.

One comment said, "This simple but powerful gesture showed that for him, victory wasn't just about being number one, it was about sharing the joy."

We discussed how we can be gracious winners and ensure that no one is ever left out.

## Remembrance 2025

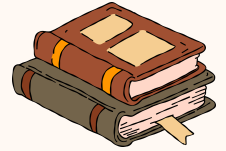
A special Remembrance service for two veterans

This year is very special for two veterans who are joining 10,000 soldiers in the remembrance day march at the cenotaph in London. James Alfred Sibbet and Ian Baker are visually impaired and have not been able to march with the veterans before.

We discussed how important it is to make sure that everyone is included, regardless of disability.



# staff book review



Lucy, Edmund, Susan, Peter, Mr Tumnus, Aslan and The White Witch are all characters from a book that I became familiar with at a very early age. I have a very old copy of the book at home that I think my Granny gave me. She certainly read it to me when I went to stay with her. The book is of course ... The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe. It's been very special for me to have been able to read it to my class last half-term. There are so many parts of it that I love. From the first time that Lucy enters the wardrobe into the magical land of Narnia to the first time Edmund meets the White Witch and is bribed with Turkish Delight! In essence it's a story of good verses evil, where mythical creatures which have been turned to stone are brought back to life by Aslan breathing on them. A favourite phrase of mine in the story is, 'it's always winter and never Christmas'. It describes the land of Narnia being under the spell of the White Witch who has banned Christmas - she doesn't want anyone to enjoy themselves. There's a great part in the story where Father Christmas arrives and gives gifts to the four children. They are not your everyday gifts and certainly items you hopefully wouldn't find under your tree!

When I first starting dating my now wife I remember taking her to see a stage performance of The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe at Sadler Wells - it was magical. The 2005 film (a favourite Christmas movie) is brilliant but you must read the book first!



As I've got older I've come to understand there is a deeper meaning to the story. C.S. Lewis the author of the story was a Christian and whilst he stated it was not an exact portrayal the life of Jesus there are definitely key Biblical themes running throughout it. For example, Aslan chooses to give himself up to the White Witch in exchange for Edmund's freedom.

One of the first things that Lucy sees when entering Narnia and one of the last things that is seen just before the children leave Narnia is the lamppost. Perhaps a symbol of the light that shines in the darkness?

Mr Chandler





# Star readers



## Year 2

Henry  
Amelia  
Niamh  
Isha



## Year 3

Mia  
Aleks  
Robyn  
Elizabeth  
Shay  
Theia-Jean  
Daniel  
Selena  
Arianna  
Emmie  
Penny



## Year 4

Nevaeh  
Rocco  
Ashton  
Darcey  
Grace  
Jake  
Hasan  
Eleanore  
Isobel  
Ava  
Maisie  
Lewis



## Year 5

Leanne  
Chloe  
Fearne  
Eva  
Ava  
Megan  
Alice  
Lucca  
Riya  
David  
Jake T  
Alex



## Year 6

Riyad  
Gina  
Nieve  
Adam  
Millie  
Kason  
Lily-Rose  
Cait  
Clara  
Connie  
George  
Freddie  
Dylan  
Ruby



Well done  
everyone

# Reception

We have had a busy start to the new half term! We have been thinking about the big idea, 'How do people celebrate special times in different ways?'. We begun by learning all about Diwali, finding out about some of the traditions, dancing to Diwali music and using clay to make diya lamps of our own. Our next celebration was Bonfire Night. We found out all about the story of Guy Fawkes and why we celebrate Bonfire Night. We shared our own exciting experiences of seeing fireworks.

Last week was also very exciting as we had a visit from some of the crew at Hertford Fire Station. We found out about all of the different ways the firefighters help people, as well as learning about some of the equipment they use. We loved seeing their fire engine up close and having a chance to sit in it too.



This week we have been thinking about Remembrance Day and why people wear poppies. We learnt that it is a special time to remember people who helped to keep us safe in the past. We looked at lots of different poppies and learnt that they are a symbol of the flowers that grew after the war.

# Year 2

We have had a very exciting start to the half term. In English we have been looking at the book *Jim and the Beanstalk*, we have compared how this is similar but different to the traditional story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. and using this to develop our oracy and ability to retell the story. The children have completed some role play to step into the character and start to think about what they might be feeling, thinking or want to say. Handwriting and the correct formation of letters which start and stop in the correct place continues to be a big focus within the class. All support to ensure children are practicing this at home is welcomed to help improve their overall presentation.

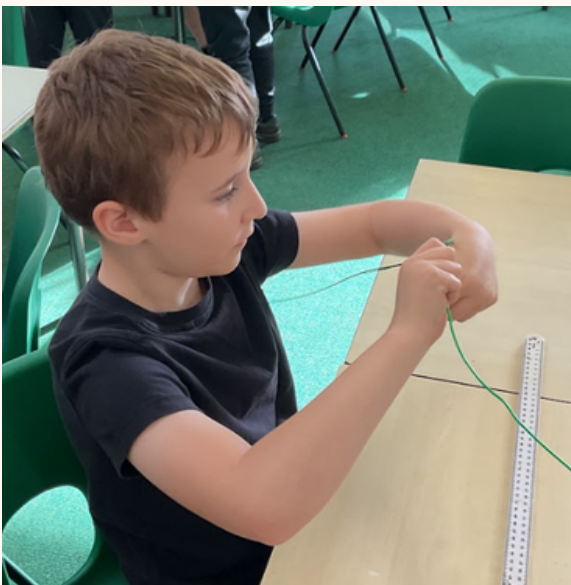
In maths we have been continuing to develop our understanding of addition and subtraction, now within 100 and using representation of 10 sticks and one cubes to support this. The children have now begun to explore what it means to exchange to convert 10 ones into a 10 stick to support them with their addition. We continue to practice our fluency of facts within our mastering number sessions to help us with rapid recall to enable us to answer more challenging questions with less difficulty.

In our foundation subjects we have started to explore the continents of the world, trying to identify which we and our family members were born in. In addition to learning the different oceans and the seas that surround the UK. Science has lead us to an investigation using observation to find out how scientists find information to questions they do not have the answer to. In RE we have been learning about why Christians call Jesus saviour, how this links to the Christmas story and our school Nativity.



# Year 4

Year 4 have had a great start to the second half of the Autumn term. Mr Taylor, an expert in teaching gymnastics, has already taught two gym lessons. The children have listened really well learning all about contrasting and matching balances, and how to work with a partner to create partner balances and sequences. At the end of each lesson, the children have performed their balances to the class. In Science, we have started a new topic all about sounds. The children recently learnt that sound can travel through solids really well. They demonstrated this by using string telephones. In RE we've been finding out about the prophet Muhammad and why he's so important to Muslims.





# Year 6!



I can't believe that it's only the second week back after half term; we've done so much already! The children have had great fun modelling light rays in science and have become thoroughly engrossed in our class novel 'When life gives you mangoes' by Kereen Getten. Ask your child to tell you about the incredible twist that happened this week!

We've had a gymnastics expert in teaching us how to perform rolls and sequences with accuracy and control while we have been learning about Tawhid and webpage creation in RE and Computing respectively. The children are always gaining confidence with their English and their maths and I have definitely seen an improved attitude to their learning.

On top of that, we even managed to fit in a trip to the Hertford Museum to learn about Hertford's home front during World War 2. Phew!

