



Reading: We recently carried out a reading review with our School Effectiveness Advisor. She recognised how effectively the Read, Write Inc. teaching is helping all children in EYFS and KS1 to learn their phonics and how the children further up the school are making progress through whole class reading sessions. It is clear that the children who read regularly at home are really benefitting from this. Becoming a fluent reader takes lots of practice. When we sent out a survey, parents asked for help rewarding their children for reading at home and we now give points for each weekday that a child reads their school book at home. Please help with this and make sure you sign the reading record. The difference it makes is massive.

Modeshift Stars: All UK schools are invited to produce an annual travel plan that promotes sustainable travel and helps children to develop sustainable and healthy attitudes to travel and transport. Hollybush has been doing so for about 5 years, Over the last 3 years Hollybush Plans have been judged Outstanding. Last year after being selected as the Herfordshire winners we were put forward for the regional competition. We won that for the East of England, one of 6 regions across the UK.



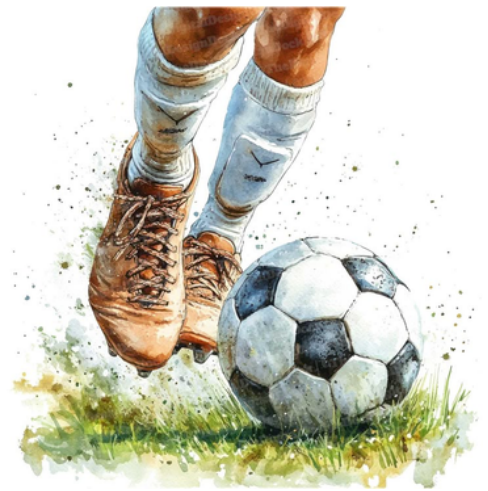
The regional winners were invited to a celebration in London. Unfortunately we did not become national winner but have done fantastically to get to this stage. We came away from the event with lots of ideas for things we can do in the future.

Two of our Travel Inspectors, Connie and Adam gave a presentation to over a hundred attendees from all round the country and did this really well. We are extremely proud of them and our entire school community for this achievement.



Maths Workshop: The Reception Mastering Number workshop last week was really well attended. I am delighted that we can work with parents, helping them to see how we teach maths and providing opportunities for them to do with their children. This is part of a national project to work with families so that all children practise skills at school and at home that help them to be confident and strong mathematicians. Thank you to the staff for planning and delivering this and all the parents who came.

District football. The team are now really coming together and putting in some great match performances . They gave a great account of themselves today, winning games, drawing others and only losing one match against the strongest team there. They are now communicating well and there were some great individual performances. Three of the players were nominated for awards, Adam and Jude were nominated for their goals and Eric for goalkeeping. Well done to the Hollybush Team.



Bicycle and scooter safely. Unfortunately, some of our children have upset local residents by racing past them after school. We will remind the children about safely passing pedestrians and would appreciate it if you could do the same.



Red Nose and Odd Socks. Thank you for your contributions. Together we collected £118 to split between these two worthwhile charities.

Have a great weekend.
J Fisher



Type of query	Member of staff to contact
Safeguarding/child protection	Mr Fisher, Mrs Cracknell, 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>Step 1 Phase Leader</p> <p>EYFS-Miss White Year 1 - 3- Mrs Christman Yea 4 - 6 -Mr Chandler</p> <p>Step 2 Deputy Headteacher Mrs Hannah Cracknell</p> <p>Step 3 Headteacher- Mr Fisher</p>
Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs	Mrs Smail
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> .

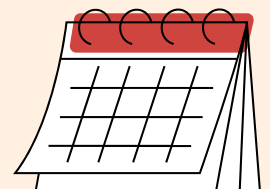
Upcoming Events 2026

March	
Friday 20th	Odd Socks Day - Down syndrome awareness
Friday 20th	District football - Selected year 5/6 children
Monday 23rd	Rock steady concert
Wednesday 25 th	Parents evening / stepping stones - Year 1
Thursday 26th	Parents evening / stepping stones - Year 1
Friday 27th	Tales together 8:40am
Friday 27th	End of term 1:15pm finish

April	
Monday 13 th	Everyone back to school
Wednesday 15th	Workshop for years 5 and 6
Wednesday 15th	Swimming begins for years 4 and 5
Thursday 16th	Swimming begins for year 3
Thursday 16th	Primary allocation day
Monday 27th	Cricket engagement day
Tuesday 28th	Y1 visit to Hertford Museum

May	
Monday 4 th	May Day Bank Holiday - School closed
Monday 18th	Class photo's
Friday 22nd	Tales Together 8:40 am
Friday 22 nd	End of half term finish 3:10 / 3:15 pm
Monday 25 th - Friday 29th	Half term - School closed

June	
Friday 12th	Inset day - school closed
Thursday 18th	Y6 Crucial crew at Morgans
Friday 19th	Inline skating day
Friday 26th	Sports day AM - All years





Swimming dates



Wednesdays

Year 5 - 11- 11:30am

Year 4 - 1:30 - 2pm

15th April

22nd April

29th April

6th May

13th May

20th May

Thursdays

Year 3 - 1:30 - 2pm

16th April

23rd April

30th April

7th May

14th May

21th May

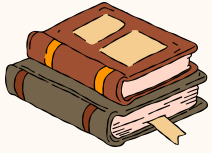
Please remember a towel, swimming costume or swimming shorts

A swimming hat - Girls and Boys

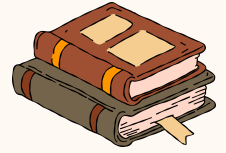
Goggles - if you can take them on and off by yourself

A snack to eat after





Staff book review



By Miss Deamer



The Wishing Chair is a magical and exciting story about two children, Mollie and Peter, who discover a very special chair that can grow wings and fly! When they sit on it and make a wish, the chair takes them on amazing adventures to strange and wonderful lands.

This book is full of imagination, fun, and surprises. One moment, the children are at home, and the next, they are visiting places like the Land of Goodies or escaping from grumpy characters. Along the way, they meet interesting friends like the pixie Chinky, who helps guide them on their journeys.

What I love about this book is how easy it is to read and how each adventure feels like a mini story. It kept me curious about where the chair will go next! The characters are kind and brave, and they learn important lessons about helping others and being careful with their wishes.

Some parts might feel a little old-fashioned because the book was written a long time ago, but the magic and excitement still make it fun today.

Overall, The Wishing Chair is a delightful and imaginative book that is perfect for young readers who love fantasy, adventure, and a little bit of magic. It's the kind of story that made me wish I had my own flying chair!

Rating: ☆ (4/5)



Star Readers

Reception

Zoe
Mya
Milena
Oliver
Mel
Eddie
Daisy
Phoebe
Riley

Year 1

Giovanni
Freddie
Harry
Maya
Joey
Freya

Year 2

Reggie
Amelia
Isha
Henry
Alfie
Patrick

Year 4

Maria



Year 5

Jake T
Riya
Alex
Marni
Mia
Chloe
Logan
Effie
Eloise
Ruzhdi
Mylo
Alice

Year 6

Gina
Nieve



Reception

Reception have been stepping into Spring!

We have been exploring the change of season, finding out all about Spring, discovering what animals do at this time of year, and spotting the signs of Spring around our school grounds. We noticed blossom on the trees, daffodils beginning to bloom, fresh new leaves growing, and even discovered an empty bird's eggshell.

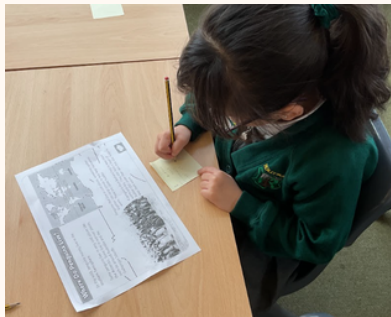
Our learning has also taken us into the life cycle of a frog. We have been finding out what happens at each stage and have been lucky enough to observe our very own frogspawn. Over the past few days, we have watched with great excitement as the frogspawn hatched and tiny tadpoles wriggled free. We can't wait to see how they change next!

This week, we have also learnt about the different parts of a plant and the important jobs they do. We explored a range of seeds and discussed what they need to grow. After planting our own seeds, we made sure to place them somewhere warm and sunny and have been watering them every day. We know it will take time for them to grow, but we are checking carefully for any changes every day!



Year 2

English – Inspired by Lost and Found We've been exploring Oliver Jeffers' charming story Lost and Found, using it as a springboard for rich discussions about friendship, adventure, and problem-solving. The children have also been diving into penguin fact files, discovering where penguins live, what they eat, and how they survive in such chilly environments.



Maths – Measuring Weight and Volume In maths, we've been getting hands-on with measuring. The children have been learning to compare and measure weight using grams and kilograms, and volume using millilitres and litres.



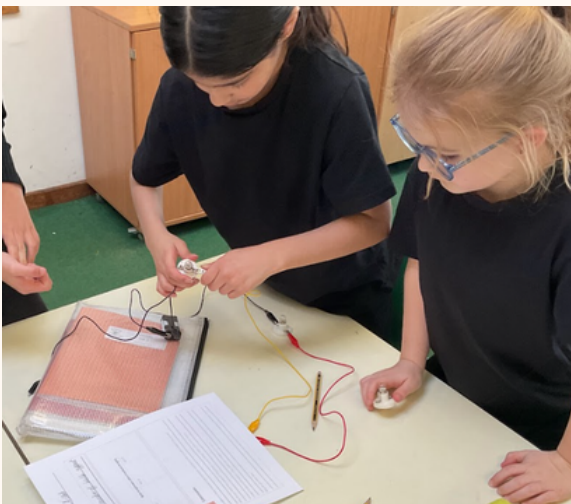
Science – Animal Growth and Survival Our science focus has been the stages of animal growth and what all living things need to survive. The children have been thinking like young scientists, observing life cycles, comparing different animals, and discussing essential needs such as food, water, shelter, and air.



Year 4

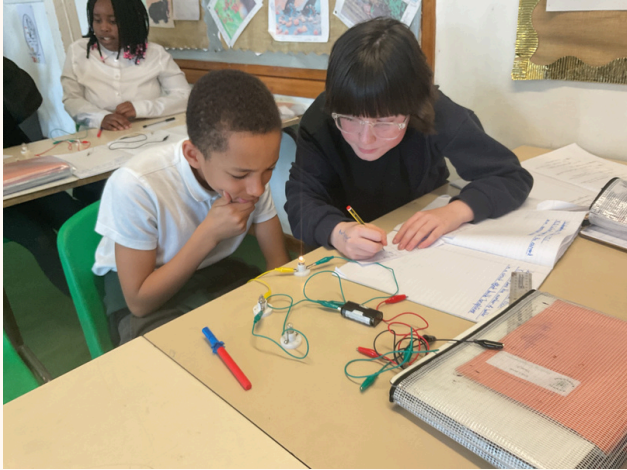


Year 4 have had a great half-term so far. There's been lots of learning and the children are making good progress in so many different areas. The introduction of dojo points has been very well received by the children. They love seeing how many dojo points they have as individuals but also as a class. We've just come to the end of one class reading book and have started a new one - [The Girl Who Stole the Elephant](#). This week in our science lesson the children were learning what happens to the brightness of a bulb when more than one bulb is added to a simple circuit. The science lessons have been very hands on and I'm looking forward to seeing them using this learning in their DT buzz-wire games. Our computing unit this half-term is all about data-loggers and capturing data that the children can then analyse. To do this we are going to use Microbits. The children have been familiarising themselves with these tiny computers. Now they know how they can programme them to record information. It's been lovely to see the children really engage with their yoga lessons. Today (19.03.2026) they learnt a 'Gratitude Flow' and thought of someone they were really thankful for as they performed their different poses.





Year 6!



Busy, busy, busy as usual here in year 6! Every day there is something new to learn, a new challenge to take on and a new achievement to be earned. The introduction of 'Class Dojo' has really motivated the children in both their behaviour and their attitude to learning and I have been very impressed with the results. I'm sure this will help them stay focused in to next term and our preparation for the dreaded SATS!

The children have really engaged well with our yoga topic in PE and by working in teams they have really supported each other in developing their strength, balance and flexibility. In science, we have thoroughly enjoyed investigating circuits, resistance and current and the children have been highly motivated to answer some challenging enquiry questions. History has seen us learning about the Victorians and their contributions to modern life. They invented so much, but the Penny Fathing was a bit weird!



World Book Day was a massive success this year with big thanks being owed to Ms Taylor for planning such interesting and exciting activities. Year 6 continue to work hard in their learning and the progress that I have seen in some children has been truly remarkable. With learning about Buddhism in RE, working on their cycling skills, formatting spreadsheets and writing some very funny letters about the three little pigs, I can't wait to see what we get up to next term. Not before a very well-earned break though!



Online Safety

WhatsApp continues to be a very popular messaging app.

The minimum age for using WhatsApp in the UK is **13 years old**. There are very good reasons for this.

Some children at Hollybush use WhatsApp on a regular basis to communicate with their friends. As a school we can't stop children using it and the choices made at home are their parents' responsibility.

We would like to ask parents to ask these questions:

Do you know if your child is using WhatsApp?

If you're child is using WhatsApp:

Do you know when they're online?

Do you know who they're communicating with?

Do you know the content of their messages?

Are the privacy settings set appropriately?



Some of these questions are harder to answer than others. It's really important that parents are able to have an open discussion about the use of WhatsApp. Children also need to feel that they can discuss the use of technology with their parents when things don't always go right.

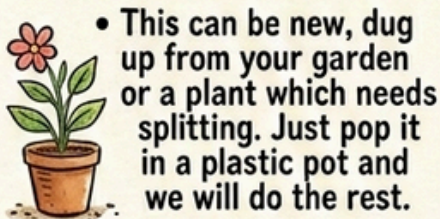
Did you know that parents can link their WhatsApp account to their children's through **parent-managed accounts**. This allows them to set controls and manage their child's experience with the app. Parents can control who can contact the account, which groups they can join and can manage the privacy settings. For more information about WhatsApp click on this link - [What is WhatsApp? A safety how-to guide for parents and carers \(Internet Matters\)](#)

HOLLYBUSH IN BLOOM 2026

Summer term



Our grounds are looking very dull, untidy and worn. To bring them back to life we are celebrating Hollybush in Bloom, where you can donate anything we can plant!



- This can be new, dug up from your garden or a plant which needs splitting. Just pop it in a plastic pot and we will do the rest.



WE WANT:
Bulbs, Perennials,
Grasses, Shrubs, Veg,
Fruit Trees...
Anything that lasts
more than a year.

Bring to the year 5 outside door or just place them in the allotment area opposite year five.



Elizabeth and Woody have placed some beautiful posters around school for you to read!

Please support our community team as they are so excited about the idea they came up with!

Here's to a blooming marvelous team effort,
From Elizabeth, Woody and Mrs Botterman