

Cheveley C of E Primary School

news



Autumn Term 2025

Dear Parents / Guardians,

I am very pleased to share with you all the Autumn Term Newsletter.

I do hope that you enjoy looking through these pages to see what the children have been engaged in.

As the term and the year draws to a close, may I take this opportunity on behalf of the staff and Governors here at Cheveley C of E Primary school, to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year.

With kindest regards,

Stacey Kendall

Head teacher

In this issue:

- Class Round-ups
- Whole School events
- Celebrations
- Church events
- Reminders
- Diary Dates

Don't forget...
Children return
Monday 5th January 2026



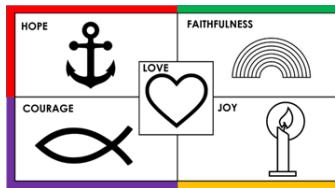
A Christmas Blessing

This Christmas time

**May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the Magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.**

**May Almighty God, Father, Son
and Holy Spirit bless you all, now and
forever.**

Amen



Elm Class

During September and October Elm Class were finding out about 'Superhero Me!' sharing how AMAZING we are.



We thought about our bodies (inside and out) and all the amazing things we can do. We also used our 5 senses. We especially enjoyed using our sense of taste to identify foods we like and dislike.

The EY children enjoyed doing their very first Drawing Club too.



They learnt all about Autumn and celebrated Cuddles' birthday and made biscuits and played party games.



Elm Class:

We all took part in a six week Balance ability course where we learnt to use balance bikes and some of us learnt how to ride a bike with pedals.



The EY children learnt about Festivals & Celebrations from around the world. First we learnt about Diwali. We made Rangoli patterns, Mendhi patterns on hands and Diya lamps.



We learnt about 'Bonfire night', Guy Fawkes and why we celebrate Bonfire night. We had a bonfire party where we sang songs around a fire that we made, we toasted marshmallows and then watched a fireworks display.



Next we all learnt about why we celebrate Remembrance Day.

The children made their own poppies as well as creating a poppy wreath which they placed next to the memorial during the Remembrance service.



Elm Class:

The children then went on to learn about the festival of Thanksgiving. The American equivalent of our Harvest festival. It is a time for Americans to come together and celebrate everything they are thankful for. We had a Thanksgiving feast to complete our learning.



As well as learning about Festivals and Celebrations, we have been learning about People who help us. We had a visit from our local community police officer who told us about her job and how she helps people. We also had a visit from the Heath paramedics and we got to find out what they do and how their vehicles help them with their jobs.



The Year 1s have worked hard this term in DT learning some new skills and practicing them so that they could design and create a hanging Christmas decoration.



Elm Class:

The final festival we learnt about was the Christian festival of Christmas. We learnt about why Christians celebrate Christmas through the nativity story. We made Christingles and visited the church for a Christingle service.



Finally we all took part in nativity performances.



Merry Christmas everyone!

Maple Class:

English

The children have been learning a range of different skills in English this term. We started by focusing on grammar and what makes a simple sentence. The children learnt that every sentence has a subject (star of the show) and verb in it. We completed a range of different activities which supported the children in understanding what the being and doing verbs were and how to identify a noun and a proper noun. We also looked at how we could use pronouns in a sentence,



We also completed some fantastic firework poems, thinking about what we can see and hear during a firework display. Maple class finished the term looking at non chronological reports on mini beasts. Each child learnt lots of facts on spiders, millipedes, dragonflies and stag beetles, we then created interesting information sheets on these animals. The children used their phonic knowledge to sound out and write a range of sentences.

RE

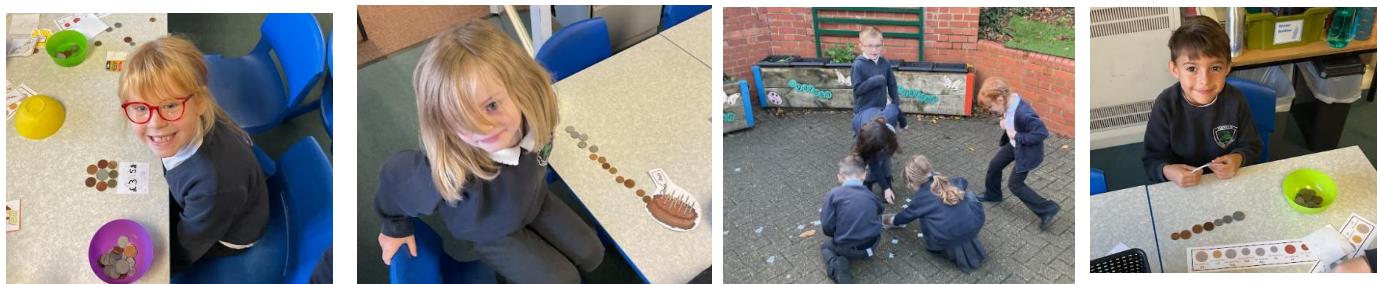
This half term we have been focusing on the question 'What happens at Hanukkah? 'The children learnt about the story surrounding Hanukkah and had a go at retelling it through drama. They also found out about how Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah, one of the ways is by playing the game 'Dreidel'. The children enjoyed taking it in turns to spin the dreidel and collect or give away different numbers of counters.



Maple Class:

Maths

We have had a very busy half term learning about addition, subtraction, money, length and mass. During our money weeks, Year 2 worked on adding different coins to make set amounts and Year 1 focused on recognising all coins from 1p to £2. They enjoyed going on a coin hunt to find all the coins hidden in the outdoor area, they then sorted them by amount.



Science

We have been learning about the body and the senses and everyday materials this term. The children learnt what the five senses are and we carried out a range of experiments to test them. These included taste tasting a range of foods and trying out different ear defenders to see which material would make the best one. We also used our sense our touch to describe a range of different materials.



Year 1 also came up with their own experiments thinking about how they could test materials. One group decided to test which materials would float and the other group tested which material would make the best wrapping present.

Maple Class:

Design and Technology

The children have really enjoyed our textiles topic in DT this half term. We have been focusing on Christmas decorations and it was super to see the children planning, designing and then making their own Christmas decorations. Year 2 particularly persevered with the running stitch.



The children had a wonderful time performing in our school play 'We Don't Know What to Buy'. Each child worked really hard on learning their lines and singing the songs. All the adults were very proud of each child for their hard work and determination to put on a super Christmas play for everyone!



Rowan Class:

The children in Rowan class have had a fantastic first term! They have all settled in well and worked hard. Here are some of our highlights.

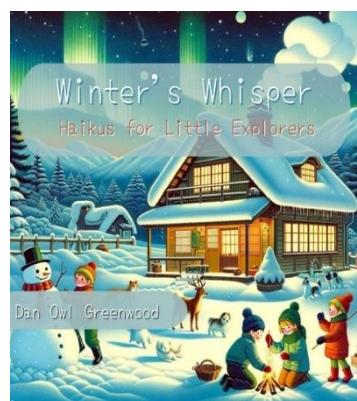
English

We started the term off learning the Place Value of Punctuation and Grammar really focusing on the parts of a sentence – Subject (common, proper or pronoun) and verb and knowing the rules for when and where to use a full stop and capital letter. The children learnt through playing games like matching word cards.

We then started working on our first piece of writing – a non-chronological report on the Titanic. Their enthusiasm for this Topic showed no bounds and they used their historical knowledge and facts gleaned from research books to produce good quality reports containing fun facts and lots of technical vocabulary.



For our Winter display we read a book called Winter's Whisper – Haikus for Little Explorers and created our own winter Haiku poems. In addition, we created origami swans – no small feat – to enhance our Japanese themed display.



Then it was time for traditional tales with a twist. The children read lots of Traditional Fairy Tales and then explored what it might be like to change them a bit. Through Drama and role-play they changed two favourite stories 'Cinderella' and 'The Three Little Pigs.'



They then used the book 'Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion' as a base for their own twisted tales, changing the character and setting. They have learnt to use expanded noun phrases for character and setting descriptions, inverted commas for speech and used a story board to plan own story.

Rowan Class:

Maths

The children have been maths superstars this term! They have learnt place value and understand what each part of the number represent for 2 and 3 digit numbers. They have learnt how to represent numbers in many different ways, compared and ordered numbers. They have learnt to add and subtract numbers mentally using place value to help and revisited all the different number bonds to help with a quick recall of number facts and fact families. They then have explored multiplication and division using equipment to make equal groups, sharing and arrays. They have been learning the time tables for 2, 5, 10 and 3, 4 and 8 and applying these into problems and investigations. Finally, we have explored money looking at coin values, counting amounts, understanding pounds and pence and some have converted between them. In our maths, we have approached it in a very practical way using a whole variety of manipulatives – going from concrete to pictorial then to abstract. The children build up the skills through fluency and then to reasoning and problem solving. We have also introduced a new Maths Mastery sessions during the week, this is a short 15 minute focus on key maths skills going over the fundamentals. The children have enjoyed using the rekenreks and number frames. Below are some photos of us doing our maths over this term.



Rowan Class:



In **Topic** the children have been learning about the History of Transport, from George Stephenson and the steam train, to the first flight of the Wright Brothers and later the tragic story of the Titanic's maiden voyage. We explored their impact on society at the time, the similarities and differences to previous and future transport and their accessibility to people from varying classes. Our next Topic was UK: Countries, Capitals and Climate where we have been learning all about the physical and human features of the United Kingdom.



In **French** we have continued our transport theme, very much enjoying the songs, recapped our Greetings and numbers and have now moved on to 'Les Fruits.'

In **PE** they have enjoyed using the equipment in Gymnastics, learning the routines in Dance and working as teams to hone their skills in Striking and Fielding and Fundamentals.



The Formal Artist Element lessons in **ART** have focused on line looking at the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat and colour through Georgia O'Keefe. Then followed a unit on Drawing where we explored space and Painting in which we focused on weather.



Rowan Class:

PSHE

This term the children have been thinking beginning and belonging. We discussed how we can make our classroom a happy and safe place to learn in, how to work collaboratively with others, recognise emotions in new situations and strategies to cope in them. They have also identified who is in their support networks and how to ask for help if they need it. After half term have learnt the unit Friends and family. We have discussed good qualities of friendships and how to be a good friend. We have thought how to manage conflict within friendships and how to resolve them. We have also discussed our similarities and differences. Photos of the children playing the 'Island' games to find out interests from each other.



Computing

In the first half term, the children explored 'connecting computers'. They have looked at what are digital devices, used laptops to compare drawing on paper to using a digital device. Learnt about outputs and inputs, how networks are connected and use servers. We also looked at the idea of identity for online safety. Then the children have been learning 'animations'. They have learnt how to make a picture move using flip books then used iMotion on the ipads to make their own short animations making a stick person move and then linked to our Titanic topic. They had to work well as a group keeping backgrounds and iPad still and used the onion layer setting on the app. I was very proud of the outcomes and they created some amazing Titanic animations.



RE

The first half of term, the children learnt about Hinduism and what they believe about God. We learnt they believe in the one supreme god and how he is portrayed by the other gods and goddesses. We read and found out about them through stories. The children created Diya lamps or a Rangoli patterns for Dwalli festival. This half term the children have been exploring 'Are all churches the same?' exploring the difference between Anglican and Baptist Churches and also a Jewish Synagogue.



Music

This term the children have been learning to play the recorder.

We have learnt to play the notes BAG and also C, E and F and learnt how to read the notation of these and also the note length values. We have created our own improvisations and we have focused on the music vocabulary – pulse, rhythm and pitch using them in our singing and playing.

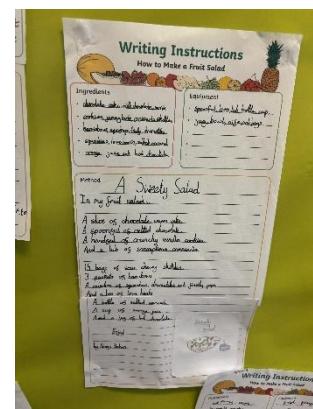
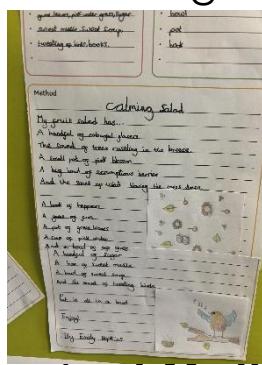
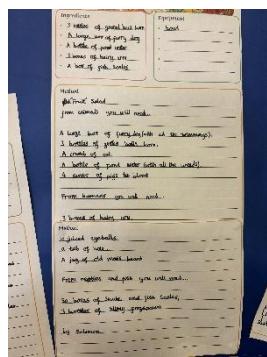
This term the children have learnt the songs 'Helping each other' and 'music man' to listen to different sounds and instruments in songs. They have learnt the songs quickly and also used the recorder for the instrumental sections. At the end of term we have had fun learning to sing and play 'We wish you a Merry Christmas' and used body percussion for Jingle Bell Rock keeping the pulse.

We visited St Mary's Church in Cheveley on the 2nd December. This visit was linked to our current RE topic 'Are all churches the same?'. We had a great talk given to us by Rev. Naomi about the different features of the Anglican church, their purpose and how it was similar or different to a Baptist and Catholic Church. The children were very engaged and keen to answer and ask questions about the church. They then had time to explore the church themselves and also hear the organ play and get to see it up close.



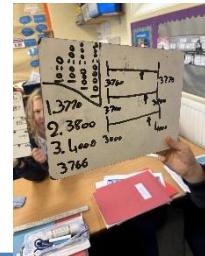
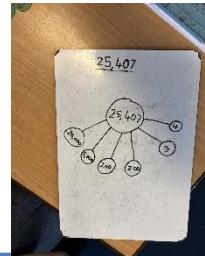
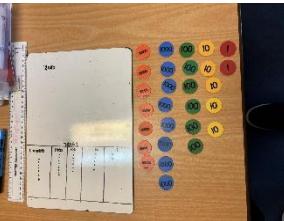
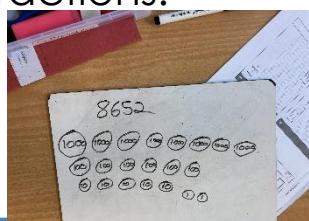
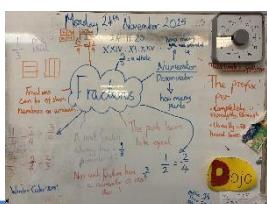
Exhilarating English

In our English lessons, we have spent time focusing on the structure of our writing and the different parts of the sentence. We then applied our newly acquired skills by writing some excellent Non-Chronological reports based on the different modes of transport and how they have changed over time. After that, it was time for our winter display, based on the book *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, about a group of children evacuated during the war to a country house. At different points, the children step through into Narnia and have a wonderful adventure. We wrote diary entries as either Lucy or Edmund – every child in Cedar did a fantastic piece of writing and we created a fantastic display.



Magical Maths

In our maths lessons, we have continued to learn more about the Place Value system, addition, subtraction and multiplication. After half term, we have focused heavily on fractions – including the relationship between mixed numbers and improper fractions. We then also learnt more about fraction and decimal equivalents. Times tables are also a huge part of life in Year 4 and 5 – we now know (almost) all of our times tables and have used this knowledge to help us solve problems involving multiplication, division and fractions.



Tremendous Topic

In our topic during September and October, we were learning all about the History of Transport. Transport began developing quickly during the Industrial Revolution and after learning about the first railways, we then learnt about the story of The Titanic, the Wright Brothers and the importance of these advancements. For a lesson about The Titanic, we were each given a real life person who was on board the ship during its fateful journey – we learnt about how their time on the ship would have been spent, their reasons for travel and ultimately what happened to them.

After half term, we have been focusing on the different parts of the world – beginning with the continents and oceans, then learning about the tropics and finally about key industrial revolution towns. We also plotted different routes which The Titanic took and compared these to the actual route – and discussed the reasons they took the route they did.

Awesome Art

In our art lessons, we focused on learning more about the different types of pencils and the different types of mark they make on the paper. We then learnt how to make artwork look 3D by using shading and understanding how the location of the light source would affect this.

We also used the oil pastels during our Winter Display work to create highly effective pieces which added to our display. For example, some of the children used them to draw the characters, some drew trees and others created the lamppost which Lucy first sees.

In our focused sessions about the different art skills we focused on the artwork of Georgia O'Keefe. She produced pictures using a variety of colours and different features within them. The children then had a go at their own pieces and did some excellent art of their own!



Creative Computing

Our computing lessons this term have been learning about computer systems and creating a podcast!

Before half term, we learnt all about how the internet actually works, how the information is passed from computer to computer and how it is received. We began by passing messages to each other but following a set pattern as they do online. We then finished the unit of work by thinking about who owns what is published online which caused some fascinating debates and thought provoking questions.

After half term, we have been learning all about Audio Production and how it is used to create podcasts. We first learnt about the job of a sound engineer and practiced using all of the tools which they have at their disposal. We then practiced making short videos of us reading our Winter Display diary entries and about some things we were passionate about. We then had a go at editing the video, changing the sound level of the speaking, adding special effects and musical intros and outros. All this led to us scripting our podcast and we are excited to record the final versions.

Physically Active

In our PE lessons, we have done a mixture of indoor and outdoor PE lessons, focusing on football, hockey, gymnastics and cheerleading.

In our gymnastics lessons, we learnt about how to put together a sequence of movements, using different paired balances, rolls, jumps and travels. We then practised and then performed these to the rest of the class.



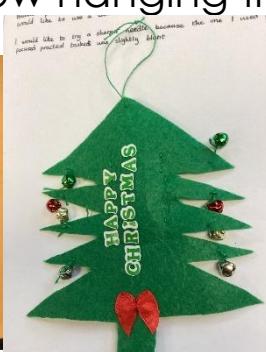
Cheerleading has been a huge success! We began by learning some simple cheerleading moves and then progressed to putting these into group sequences. Finally, we learnt some group positions (all of which involved children being off the ground) and added these to our sequences. They all did an amazing job!



In our hockey lessons, we have been using the 'real' hockey sticks, which has meant we have had to learn how to use the reverse side of the stick. We have also learnt about different passing and dribbling techniques and also the two types of tackle (open side and jab tackle). We then applied our newly learnt skills in a tournament in our final two lessons of the term.

Tree-mendous DT

During our DT lessons this half term, we have been focusing on the design process and the cycle we go through to create something new. We then put this into practice by researching, designing, making and evaluating a hanging tree decoration. At the beginning of the process, we practiced the different stitches required and then had a go at using these to join different fabrics together. Finally, we created our own new hanging tree decoration.



Music

Our music lessons have been taught by Mrs Akinsanya on a Thursday morning. She has done a brilliant job of developing the children's skills on the recorder. This half term, she has focused on singing different genres of music, the children have shared their favourite pieces of music and they have also composed their own music too.

French

Mrs Brandt has excellently taught the children French this half term. They have learnt about free time activities, French Phonetics and how to travel to school.

RE

Mrs Hepworth has brilliantly taught the children RE. They have learnt about Buddhism and The Trinity.

Science

The Year 5 science has been taught by Mrs Hepworth. They have learnt about Earth and Space and then forces.

The Year 4 science has been taught by Mrs Cunningham. They have learnt about Electricity and States and Matter.

English

This term in English, Oak Class has been focused on developing their skills in writing non-chronological reports. They started by researching the UK Parliament, collecting key facts and details to include in their reports. Following this, they planned their work carefully, organising their ideas under clear headings and subheadings. The children then drafted their reports, paying attention to using formal language, technical vocabulary, and engaging sentence structures. Finally, they edited and refined their work to ensure it was accurate, well-structured, and easy to understand. It has been a pleasure to see their creativity, hard work, and progress shine through in their completed reports.

The image shows four children's non-chronological reports on 'The UK Parliament' and a photograph of the Palace of Westminster. The reports are handwritten and include illustrations of the Palace of Westminster, the Union Jack, and the Royal Coat of Arms. The reports cover topics such as the history of the UK Parliament, its structure (House of Commons and House of Lords), and its functions. The photograph shows the Palace of Westminster across the River Thames under a blue sky with clouds.

THE UK PARLIAMENT

The UK Parliament is made of three parts: the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the Monarchy. The House of Commons is where most of the work of government takes place. It is made up of 650 members who are elected by people in their constituencies. The House of Lords is where most of the work of government takes place. It is made up of 700 members who are appointed by the Queen. The Monarchy is the head of state and represents the country.

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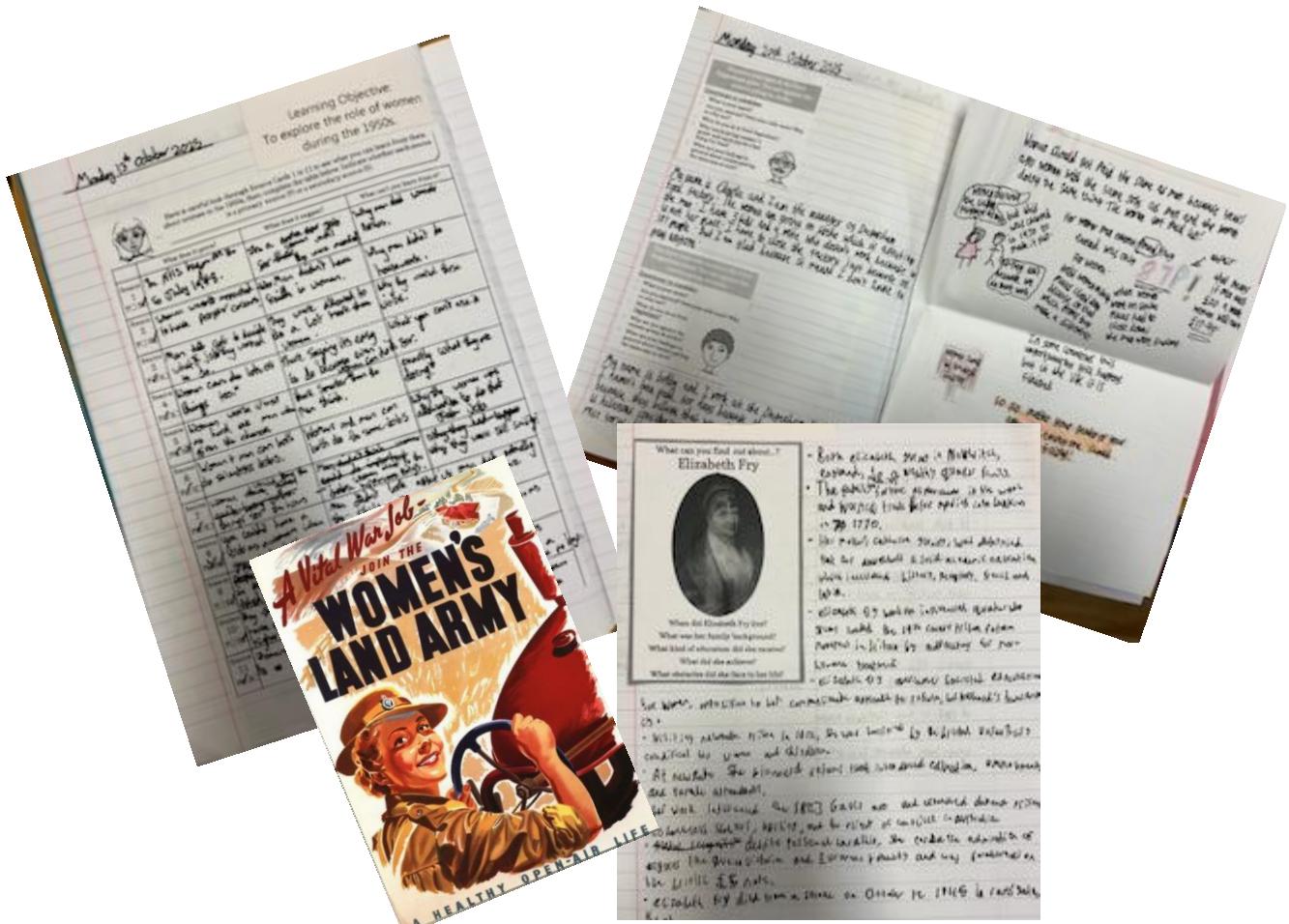
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Topic

This term, the children have been studying the changing roles of women throughout history. They have learned about the suffragettes, their contributions during World War I and II, the fight for equal pay and how women's roles in the home have evolved over time. Through exploring the causes, key events, and lasting impacts of these topics, they have gained a deeper understanding of the significant shifts in women's roles in society. Using a variety of historical sources, stories, and creative activities, the children have developed a greater awareness of how these historical changes have shaped perceptions of women in the modern world.



Year 5 Science

Our science last half term was Earth & Space, we learnt about our solar system, the movement of the Moon relative to the Earth and day and night. We made up our own mnemonics to remember the order of the planets like: "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Noodles!"

This half term we looked at a range of forces and their effect including gravity, air resistance, water resistance, friction and carried out investigations. We also explored how some mechanisms, including levers, pulleys and gears, allow a smaller force to have a greater effect.



Investigating water resistance



Levers – how they can be used to lift a heavy weight using a smaller force.



Effect of friction on different surfaces.

Year 6 Science

This term, Year 6 have been learning about light and electricity. Through hands-on experiments, they explored how light travels, observed the formation of shadows and uncovered the wonders of reflection and refraction. They also explored the fundamentals of electricity by building simple circuits, learning about conductors and insulators and understanding how electrical energy flows. Throughout their investigations, they asked insightful questions and collaborated effectively to overcome challenges, demonstrating curiosity and teamwork in every step of their learning journey.



Young Leaders

Year 6 have started completing their 'Alfie's Challenges' and thinking about what makes a good leader and how to work successfully in a team.

Travel Ambassadors

Year 5 have been promoting 'Be Bright, Be Seen' around the school and safety in the dark. They performed an assembly to the rest of the school, ran competitions and met with the Travel Ambassador leader to discuss their project.

RE

Our topic this half term Was “What would Jesus do?” We explored Jesus’ teachings and expectations — the Sermon on the Mount is an example of this, where Jesus’ values favour serving the weak and vulnerable. We also found out how Christians contribute and offer support to the global community. We finished the topic by exploring the similarities and differences of Christmas traditions in England to Germany. In the German tradition of making their own Christmas decorations, here we are with our handmade decorations.



Outdoor PE

In outdoor PE this term, where we tested our ball skills in Football and Hockey. As well as learning the fundamental skills in both these sports, children also further developed their communication and negotiation skills for team work.

Events:

Harvest

The Year 3 children led Harvest in School, sharing poems, stories and prayer to help us give thanks.

The whole school then attended St Mary's church to give thanks, with each class sharing stories, poems, prayers and songs to celebrate Harvest.



We also collected food donations for Newmarket Open Door.



Events:

Remembrance

After the Remembrance worship led by Oak Class, each child placed their poppy on the foyer display. As a whole school, we then walked to the memorial in Cheveley and laid our class wreaths.



Christingle Service at St Mary's Church

We celebrated the birth of Jesus at St Mary's church by listening to Bible readings, finding out about the meaning of the Christingle and singing Christmas songs.



Events:

Charity Support this term

This term we have supported the following charities-

- McMillan Cancer Support raising **£200** with our coffee mornings.
- Royal British Legion raising money with our poppy appeal.
- Children in Need raising **£107.80** with our Non-Uniform event
- Teams4U with over **60** Christmas boxes

Enormous thanks goes to all who took part – your generosity will make a real difference to those in need.



End of Term Celebrations



Many congratulations go to-

Inspiring Reader Award



Leo

Martin

Ruaridh

Kaiaan

Amelia

Inspiring Writer Award



Jemima

Rosie

Darcey

Zachary

Evangeline

Inspiring Mathematician Award



Oliver

Jasper

Alex

Max

Oscar

Hope



Faithfulness



Courage



Joy



Love



Freddie

Alfie T

James

Flo

Claire

Amelie

Elise

Jack

Emmie

Connor

Amina

Lily K

Phoenix

Freya

Freddie f

Solomon

Ethan

Mavis

Edward

Ivy

Paige

Isabel

Oliver S

Sofia

Oliver H

Key Stage 1 Good Citizen Award

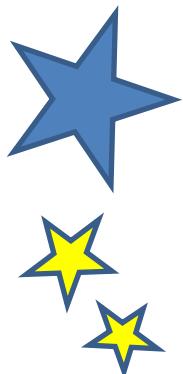
Lower Key Stage 2 Good Citizen Award

Upper Key Stage 2 Good Citizen Award

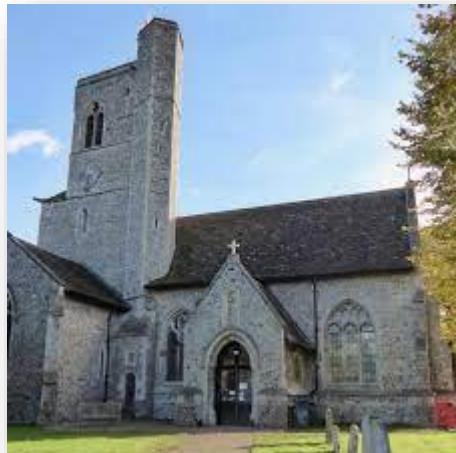
Teddi D

Emily

Alexander



St Mary's Church:



Please find below a list of dates and activities that all children and families are welcome to attend.
*Please note that some activities are held in other local churches.

Christmas Church Services

Wednesday 24th December –

Crib Service 3 pm Cheveley Church

Communion 10 pm Cheveley Church (Midnight Mass)

Thursday 25th December – Christmas Morning Service

Holy Communion with carols 9 am Kirtling Church

Holy Communion with carols 11am Woodditton Church



Staying Safe online this Christmas



12 Social Media Online Safety Tips FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

With Christmas only a few weeks away, many of you will be using social media to share your excitement with friends and family. Being active on social media is a great way to show others how much fun you're having, but it's important that you know how to use these apps safely and securely so that bad things don't happen. By following our safety tips below, you can make sure that your personal information stays private, your postings are positive and that your social media use overall is responsible, healthy and most of all enjoyable.

1 DON'T ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS FROM STRANGERS



Make sure that you set your profile to private so that people you don't know can't find you online. Always tell a trusted adult if a stranger or somebody you don't know sends you a message or a friend request.

2 NEVER SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

Keep your personal information personal. Sometimes people online aren't always who they say they are and might ask you to share things that you don't feel comfortable sharing.

3 DON'T SHARE EMBARRASSING PHOTOS OR VIDEOS OF OTHERS ONLINE

This could really upset them and could get you into a lot of trouble. Always think twice before posting anything on social media and treat people online as you would in real-life.

4 NEVER SEND NAKED PICTURES OF YOURSELF TO OTHERS

This is illegal if you are under 18 and you could get into trouble with the Police. If you are being pressured by someone, always say no and tell a trusted adult. Even if you think it is innocent fun, the photo could be shared with other people and you won't be able to control who else sees it.

5 CREATE A POSITIVE ONLINE REPUTATION

Always be kind and polite when posting comments on social media and only upload pictures and videos of things you are proud of. This forms part of your digital footprint. Everything you do online can be tracked and monitored and could affect what people think of you in real-life if it is negative.

6 LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME

Social media can be addictive, and it is easy to keep checking newsfeeds or your notifications every 5 minutes which can affect your behaviour and stop you from doing other things. Remember to only use your phone at certain times of the day, turn notifications off at bedtime and go out and have as fun as much as possible. This will keep you fit and healthy and make you appreciate there's more to life than just what's on social media.

7 BLOCK ONLINE BULLIES

Sometimes people might say nasty things to you online or post offensive comments on your pictures or videos. If this happens, always tell a trusted adult who will help you block them from your profile and support you in taking further action.

8 REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

If you see something on social media that you don't like, offends you or upsets you, you should always report it to a trusted adult. You should also report it to the social media app who will be able to remove the content if it is against their user policy and can block the person who posted it.

9 ONLY USE APPS WHICH YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO USE

Before downloading any new social media app, always check the age-rating. If you need help, ask your parent or carer to make sure that the app is safe for you to use and never download anything which you are too young for as it may contain content that isn't safe for you to see.

10 ALWAYS SECURE ALL YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES WITH A PASSWORD

This will help to keep your private information safe and won't allow others to access your profiles without your permission. Make sure your passwords are memorable and personal to you but something which other people can't guess, and always share them with your parents just in case you forget them.

11 ASK PARENTS TO SET-UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS' FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

When you download a social media app, you should always ask a trusted adult to help you set it up for the first time. This will help you control who sees what you post, who can contact you and make sure you are able to enjoy using the app safely and securely.

12 ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR TRUSTED ADULT IF SOCIAL MEDIA IS MAKING YOU UNHAPPY

Sometimes, social media can make us feel bad about ourselves or sad that we aren't the same as someone else or doing the same things as someone else. Remember, if you ever feel this way, it's really important to talk to your trusted adult(s) like your parents, carers, other adult family members or a teacher, all of whom will be able to support you and discuss your feelings with you to help make you feel better.

Staying Safe this Christmas

At The National College, our *WakeUpWednesday* guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON.

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES

Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD

Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS

Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS

Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gift items meet safety standards and are age-appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE

Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>

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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 11.12.2024

If you need support this Christmas

Please find below useful contacts should you or a loved one require support over Christmas.

Age UK - <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) -
<https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

Cruse Bereavement Support - <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

Men's Advice Line - <https://mensadviceline.org.uk/>

Mind - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/useful-contacts/>

Money Helper - <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

National Domestic Abuse Helpline -
<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

Newmarket Open Door - 01638 600 699

NHS – 111

Papyrus - <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

Refuge - <https://refuge.org.uk/>

Relate - <https://www.relate.org.uk/>

Samaritans – <https://www.samaritans.org/>

Shout - <https://giveusashout.org/>

The Trussell Trust - <https://www.trussell.org.uk/>



Reminders:



Reminders for the new year ...

- Please check clothing labels and make sure that all items are clearly marked with your child's name.
- Please remember that children need to come to school each day with a named coat as we go outside – even if it is raining!
- PE kits need to be plain and without hoods – this is to keep children safe. We ask that earrings are removed (or taped) and long hair is tied up.
- We do not allow nail varnish or makeup for children.
- If your child has permission (a signed letter) to walk home and they bring a phone to school, they must hand it in each day to the office for safe keeping.
- Children are welcome to bring a fruit or vegetable snack each day to have at playtime (EY, Y1 & Y2 get a free piece from school). Please help us by naming Tupperware pots so that they can be returned to you.
- We are a nut and shellfish free school. This is because we have children with life threatening allergies to these food items in our school.
- A reminder that you will receive a Dojo notification should the school need to close in an emergency (i.e. due to burst pipes, no heating, bad weather etc).
- Please do make sure you park safely, legally and courteously around the school at drop off and pick up time. School begins at 8.45 am each day with gates opening at 8.35.

Diary dates:

| Date | Event or Activity |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Monday 5th January 2026 | Children return to school |
| Thursday 8th January | Learn to ride a bike – Yr 4 |
| Monday 12th January | Whole School Anti-bullying day |
| Monday 19th January | School Council – Music Day |
| Wednesday 28th January | Dentist Check up – EY & Yr 1 |
| Friday 30th January | PT&FA New Year Disco |
| Wednesday 4th – Friday 6th February | Year 5 & 6 Residential to Hilltop |
| Thursday 12th February | Vision Screening - EY |
| Monday 16th – Friday 20th February | Half Term – No School |
| Monday 23rd February | No School – Staff Training |
| Tuesday 24th February | Children return to school |