

8th September 2023

Dear families

Firstly, welcome to our new families joining us in the Willows and welcome back to our existing families as we begin a new academic year. The children have settled in really well and have been really happy to return after the Summer break.

In the Head Teacher newsletter, read on to find out about learning in each class, events around the school and our classroom award winners.

Stronger Together

School Census

It is School Census Day on Thursday 5th October and as you may know, our funding allocation is set based on the number of children we have in school on that day and our take up of school meals. As a result, we are running a 'Your School Menu' competition. The children have been given a pack to design the school lunch menu for Census Day. The winning entry for the school will receive book voucher tokens and the winning entry for the Torquay Hub will be served for school dinners on the day. Finally, the winning menu across the whole school Trust and the school with the highest percentage attendance will win £750 to be spent on experiences for the children. What an amazing opportunity for the children.

Meet the Teacher and Curriculum Information

Next week, we will be holding Meet the Teacher session for Y1/2 Wednesday, Y3/4 Tuesday and Y5/6 Thursday at 2:35pm in The Qube before school pick up. During these sessions, the teachers will introduce themselves to you and share pertinent points for the year ahead. This will be followed up with curriculum information for each year group after these meetings. As always, please do contact us or speak to your class teacher with any questions or queries of any kind – we are stronger together.

Respect in The Beeches

In the Beeches this week, the children have been exploring the concept of respect within our RHE sessions. The class thought about what respect looks like and how it feels when others show respect towards them. As part of the session, the children considered the importance of self-respect and thought about ways that they can positively respect themselves. This has linked wonderfully to our daily mindfulness exercises as the children have been taking time each day for self-reflection and have participated in activities to positively promote their mental health. Over the next few weeks, we will be thinking about ways that this value can be spread into the community and further.



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FLOURISHING FUTURES

Sense of Belonging

Welcome Willows

The Willows have had a fabulous start at Ilsham Academy. All the children have shown resilience, by coming into class independently, with a big smile! The children have now started full time and are getting used to their new environment and the rules and routines. They have had lots of fun exploring the inside and outside classroom, for lots of learning opportunities. We have introduced our snack café, and they are enjoying showing their independence and paying for their snack using Numicon! The children also attended their first whole school assembly!

A week in the Rowans

The Rowans have settled beautifully into year one. They have had a busy week getting to know the daily routine and where everything is, whilst Miss Davies gets to know their names. After only two days, they were in the full swing of their Read Write Inc. lessons, and they have begun Numbersense. To support the transition into year 1, the children have still been accessing continuous provision and they have enjoyed developing their writing and maths skills.



Mindfulness and Wellbeing

We are always evaluating our approaches and last year, Mrs Bennett achieved a Senior Mental Health Lead qualification and we trained KS2 children to be Mental Health Champions. This year, we are entering the next phase of supporting the children's wellbeing and mental health. As a result, every day, each class will complete wellbeing/mindfulness exercises and mental health champions will be running a wellbeing check-in session for their peers during lunchtimes. Supporting all children to recognise and process their emotions as well as support each other in understanding that 'it is ok, not to be ok' is of paramount importance to us. We look forward to seeing the impact of this work with the children.

School Councillors

As we begin a new school year, the children have nominated their new school councillors for the upcoming year. The school council was really successful last year in providing a voice for all children and shaping the direction of the school – the children can always tell us what is working well and what we can improve. Congratulations to our new school councillors!

Removing Barriers

Hollies French Lessons

In a wonderful start to the new year in Hollies, the children have settled in beautifully. We have started to explore the intricacies of French phonetics. I was incredibly impressed with their pronunciation and their love of the language. Learning the phonetics of French will further their understanding of the written language, and how the sound patterns differ from English. The children learned, amongst other sounds, 'oi' which actually makes the sound 'wa'. They were blown away at how different the pronunciation was. Bird in French is oiseau, which phonetically is wazow. We are very much looking forward to our next exciting instalment.

Realising the Possible

Reading for Pleasure in The Monkey Puzzles

This week in Monkey Puzzles, the children have been focussing on two key authors and exploring their work. This term, we will be learning about different texts by both Michael Morpurgo and Malorie Blackman. The children have spent some time this week researching facts about these authors, listening to them read extracts from one of their books and replicating covers and blurbs from their work. We are very much looking forward to continuing our exposure to these writers.

Peripatetic Music Tuition

We are delighted to be partnering with Blossoms Music School, run by Chris Blurton, who worked closely with our choir last year, for peripatetic music tuition at Ilsham. There are a range of instruments available to learn with Blossoms, now including flute, clarinet and violin. It is wonderful to see the participation of so many children learning an amazing skill and we look forward to showcasing this with the school community in the future. Please do get in touch if you would like your child to sign up to music tuition.

Living our Vision and Values in The Maples



The Maples have been thinking about their aspirations for their time in Year 3. Each child has created a star that holds what they would like to achieve by the end of Year 3. Some of the aspirations included improving their handwriting, becoming more confident in English and wanting to be recognised as child of the month. These stars have been displayed in our classroom so the children can see them and reach for the stars!



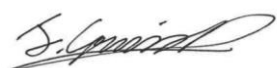
Computing in Oaks

This week in Oaks the children have started their new Computing Unit: Systems and Searching. The children were introduced to the concept of a system through analysing how the various parts of a bicycle work together and for what purpose. This furthered the children's understanding of how components can work together to perform a task. The children enjoyed applying this understanding of a system to digital systems through designing their own talking teddy (including inputs, outputs and processes) and exploring how computers in a system communicate with other devices through the example of smart lockers. We are looking forward to deepening our understanding of computer systems across the half term.

School Awards

Class	 Star of the Week	 Presentation Award
Willows	All the Willows, for being superstars in their first week at school.	Jayden, for taking care with his colouring and remembering his pencil grip.
Rowans	Samuel is my star for his eagerness to learn and fantastic effort in Read Write Inc.	Lottie, for her beautiful handwriting. Great letter formation and lovely presentation.
Beeches	Anna – for her stunning learning behaviours and wonderful listening in class. What a super start to Year 2!	Gracie – for taking such pride in her artwork this week. Well done, Gracie.
Maples	Ptolemy for coming in with a big smile on his face every single day! Well done, Ptolemy!	Hugo for working hard to ensure his handwriting is high-quality in all his work.
Hollies	Hugo, for having such a positive outlook and a can-do attitude in all he has done this week.	Mason, for his consistently beautiful presentation.
Oaks	Romany who has demonstrated exceptional levels of our compassionate value all week.	Henry K for taking great care when presenting his work in maths.
Monkey Puzzles	Joseph and Lars for entering Year 6 with a mature and positive attitude towards their learning.	Faith for an incredible improvement in handwriting.

Have a wonderful weekend.



Mr J Grinsill
Head Teacher