

1st December 2023

Dear families

This week is the final call for the Christmas Home Learning opportunities. Thank you so much for entries for the Christmas home learning opportunities with our local community. We have received a few entries for the two projects, but we are hopeful of spreading more cheer within the local community.

Please do ask the school office or class teacher if you require more details and hand in any completed designs to the school office when they are ready. We look forward to receiving more contributions.

At St Matthias Church tomorrow, Saturday 2nd December, Eco-Fest is taking place with a number of stalls and a group of Y6 children from our school sharing a presentation. As part of the Eco-Fest, there is an opportunity for children to make sustainable tree decorations which will be displayed on the Wellswood Community Christmas Tree - we hope to see many of you there.

Before I share further details of what has been happening around the school this week, I would also like to recognise the amazing job that Miss Hughes, our site supervisor, has done with the Christmas decorations around the school – the children have loved it, and we are so grateful for Miss Hughes going above and beyond over the weekend for our school community.

Stronger Together

Staff Professional Development

This week, our dedicated educators at Ilsham Academy gathered for a professional development meeting. The focus was on celebrating the progress made by our wonderful students. Teachers engaged in collaborative discussions, sharing insights on individual and collective achievements, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of each child's development. Moreover, the team diligently planned assessment opportunities to navigate the upcoming end of the Autumn Term. This collaborative effort not only reinforces our commitment to student success but also ensures that our assessment strategies remain dynamic and responsive to the unique needs of each learner. We look forward to implementing these insights in our classrooms and continuing to foster a supportive and enriching learning environment for all our students.

Sense of Belonging

Mental Health Assembly

We are thrilled to share the success of our recent mental health assembly delivered by the Youth Mental Health Foundation at Ilsham Academy, dedicated to promoting wellbeing among our students. The engaging session focused on the importance of mental health, self-care, and fostering positive relationships. Through insightful discussions and interactive activities, our students gained valuable insights into managing stress, building resilience, and prioritizing their mental health.



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FLOURISHING FUTURES

At Ilsham, we remain committed to nurturing not only academic excellence but also the holistic well-being of our students. The session was led by a young adult with ADHD, and she bravely shared her experiences, which resonated with many of our pupils. A big thank you to all involved in making this assembly a positive and impactful experience for our school community!

Christmas has arrived in the Willows!

In the lively Willows classroom, eager young minds soaked in the significance of Christmas, discovering why it holds a special place in the hearts of Christians. With wide-eyed curiosity, the children embraced the essence of giving, love, and the joy that this time of year brings.

The classroom was filled with excitement as the Willow's carefully decorated their Christmas tree. The air is now filled with anticipation as they eagerly await the unveiling of the first day on their Advent calendar, a daily countdown that has added an extra sprinkle of magic to Christmas.

As the children's enthusiasm grew, so did their understanding of the meaning behind Christmas—an essential time for Christians to celebrate the birth of Jesus and reflect on the values of compassion and togetherness. We are all looking forward to many more festive activities to come in the next two weeks!



Removing Barriers

Repeated Patterns in the Rowans

In the Rowans, they have been exploring the world of 2D and 3D shapes, applying their understanding to create captivating repeating patterns. They used basic 2D shapes like squares, triangles and circles to construct creative designs. They then added more depth to their patterns with 3D shapes, enhancing their grasp of geometric concepts. Through hands-on activities, the children developed both mathematical skills and artistic expression in their exploration of shape.

Realising the Possible

Eco-Fest at St Matthias Church

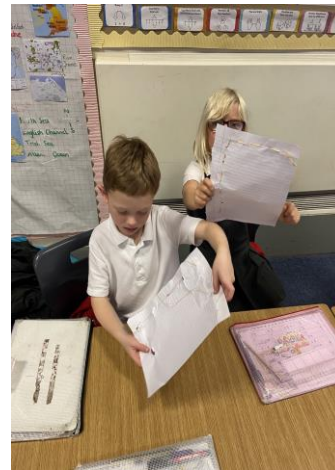
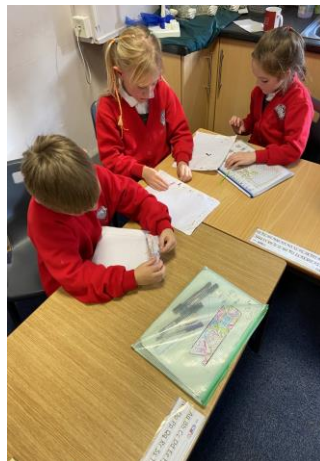
We are delighted to announce that as part of their Year 6 Civic Award, our students will be presenting valuable information on climate change. We are immensely proud of the hard work and dedication these young individuals have put into their research and presentations. To witness their efforts and gain insights into the crucial topic of climate change, we invite our school community to join us at St Matthias Church from 12:15 onwards. Your presence and support mean a lot to our students, and we look forward to sharing this enlightening experience with you. Thank you for being part of our vibrant Ilsham Academy community! The children, who are presenting in person, shared their work with the Year 5 and 6 children this week and it was incredible to see their passion and dedication to making a difference in the world. We are so proud of them.



Design and Technology in The Beeches

We are delighted to share the exciting happenings in The Beeches class this week. Our Year 2s have discovered a newfound passion for the skill of sewing! Under the guidance of Miss Rowe-Jones and a few experts in the class, we have been exploring the running stitch in preparation for making our Christmas stockings. This was

our first attempt at this craft and the children have fully immersed themselves into the world of sewing. Not only have they honed their stitching techniques, but they have also begun to realise the potential that lies within this skill. The joy and pride on their faces as they were practicing was truly heartwarming. We cannot wait to see their creativity and perseverance flourish as they continue this exciting journey.



Scientific Enquiry in The Hollies

The children continued their scientific enquiry into electrical circuits this week. We used problem solving and observing and measuring to make our own switches with everyday objects such as paperclips, tin foil and split pins. Through trial and error, the children persevered to create working circuits that contained homemade switches that could be opened and closed. The amazement and awe when they succeeded in lighting the bulb or buzzing a buzzer was a great thing to behold.

Writing in the Oaks

This week, we have been enjoying learning all about the life and achievements of Sir David Attenborough and writing our own versions of his biography in our writing lessons. The children have honed their skills as writers and have mastered a variety of skills: adverbial phrases, repetition for effect, dashes for parenthesis and subordination. I have been wowed by the way the class have mastered these skills. Impressively, a number of the class have also been challenging themselves to use colons and semi-colons in their work. Additionally, we have spent time practising our letter formation. I am very much looking forward to the class writing their own independent biographies next week.

Scientists in Monkey Puzzles

This week, the children in Year 6 have been continuing to learn about light and, as part of this, focussing on the eye. They were amazed by the effects of light on the sizing of the pupil and they were able to investigate this by observing what happens to the eye in both darkness and light; there was so much excitement! The children also learnt about the important career of opticians and the role they play in maintaining eye health.

Virtual Author Event in the Maples

On Wednesday morning, the Maples were lucky enough to take part in a virtual author session with poet Joshua Siegal. They were introduced to some of his work and were mesmerised by it. It produced lots of laughter and smiles across the classroom. Joshua Siegal then took the children step by step through poetry writing and they ended the session writing their very own poem in the style of Joshua's work. They are looking forward to getting some of his books in the Maples classroom to explore further.



Book Swap

On Wednesday 6th December, we will be holding a book swap after school in the playground (or the Qube if the weather is bad). We would be very grateful if you could please send in any gently-used books before this date that you are happy to pass on to other families. Children will receive a team point for every book they donate. We look forward to seeing you on the 6th!

Christmas Jumper Concert

On Thursday 7th December, the school choir will be performing at the Palace Theatre Paignton as part of the Blossom's Music School concert. The performance begins at 7pm and concludes at 9pm. We would welcome as many people to come and support us as possible; it promises to be a wonderfully festive event!

If you would like to come along, you can book tickets here: [Christmas Jumper concert - Events in Paignton - The Palace Theatre Paignton](#)

Tickets are priced at: Adult £9.50 Senior £8 Child £6.50

Please remember, if booking tickets, that you book for **Thursday 7th December** as there are two events listed. We hope to see you there!

From the PTFA

The PTFA are still looking for more volunteers to assist at the Christmas Fair. If you are able to help, please let your class parent rep or the school office know. Proceeds from the Christmas Fair will be put towards providing some new ICT for the school.

Have a lovely weekend,
Mr Grinsill and The Ilsham Team



Weekly Attendance

Class	Attendance %
The Willows	95.8
The Rowans	94.7
The Beeches	97.2
The Maples	98.6
The Hollies	86.7
The Oaks	98.7
The Monkey Puzzles	97.4
Whole School	95.5

Diary Dates

- 7th December - Christmas Jumper Day (wear a Christmas jumper in place of school sweatshirt - please note, this is not a non-uniform day)
- 7th December - School choir perform at the Palace Theatre, Paignton
- 8th December - PTFA Christmas Fair, St Matthias Church, 3pm
- 13th December - Christmas Lunch (book on MCAS)
- 13th December - School Nativity, St Matthias Church, 6pm
- 15th December - Christmas Party Day (non-uniform, children's entertainer)

School Awards

Class	 Star of the Week	 Presentation Award
Willows	Annabella – for being so confident and showing courage in her learning when she has to go out of her comfort zone. Well done, Annabella!	Arthur – for trying so much harder with his pencil grip and control. Keep it up Arthur!
Rowans	Gracie is our star this week because she has been trying so hard with her sentence writing. Gracie is also a role model to her friends with her exceptional behaviour around school.	Gruff – Your handwriting has improved greatly, and it is wonderful to see how much time and effort you have put into it.
Beeches	Stephanie is our star this week for her fantastic deepening the moment in English. Your exceptional sentence construction inspires us all. Well done!	Louis, you are persevering in our handwriting lessons and focusing on your letter formation, taking your time and producing neat letters. Well done, Louis. Keep it up!
Maples	Cydney for your determination in every single Maths lesson. Your confidence is growing and you are shining within each lesson well done!	Jude for your outstanding dedication to improving your handwriting in every single lesson. Well done, Jude, keep it up!
Hollies	Barney for his relentless enthusiasm for learning and his can-do attitude. His positivity is infectious and inspires me, as well as all of his classmates.	Imogen-Mae for her careful and considered approach to presentation across all subjects.
Oaks	Tilly for consistently demonstrating excellent learning behaviour and our school Values in class. Great work Tilly!	Immy for working extremely hard to improve her letter formation. I am impressed with the progress you have made!
Monkey Puzzles	This week, there are 3 Stars' of the Week in Year 6: Bea, Millie and Faith. Their effort and dedication, which they have put into their Civic Award presentations has been truly inspiring and I am so very proud of them for standing up and making their voices heard. Well done!	Charlee- for an incredible effort in handwriting and the progress he has made!