

15th December 2023

Dear families

As we arrive at the much-awaited Christmas break, it brings me joy to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the entire Ilsham Academy community. To our resilient and spirited children, thank you for your boundless enthusiasm, curiosity, and hard work throughout this term. A heartfelt appreciation goes to our dedicated staff for their unwavering commitment to providing a nurturing and engaging learning environment. To our supportive parents, thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of shaping your child's educational journey. As we embrace the festive season, let us reflect on the accomplishments and growth we've witnessed together.

Stronger Together

PTFA Support

A massive thank you to our wonderful PTFA who have kindly raised over £1500 for us to fund new iPads for the children here at Ilsham Academy. That is an incredible amount of money. These iPads will enable the children to fully embrace our computing curriculum and will help the children to gain more independence when completing a whole range of programming, digital media and data collection activities. Not only will these valuable devices significantly impact our computing curriculum, they will also enable children across the school to independently access online interventions and support resources in lessons across the curriculum.

Over the past two years, the Trust has invested around £750,000 upgrading the IT infrastructure, broadband and hardware for the school and we are so fortunate to also be supported by the PTFA. On behalf of all the staff here at Ilsham Academy, thank you!

Choir in the Local Community

Our choir recently had the heartwarming opportunity to visit a local care home this week for the elderly, spreading joy and festive cheer through the gift of music. This experience not only showcased the musical talents of our students but also instilled valuable life lessons in compassion, respect, and inspiration. The intergenerational connection forged during the visit had a profound impact, fostering a sense of empathy and understanding among the children as they interacted with the residents. The benefits of this exchange extended beyond the immediate joy it brought to the elderly audience; it enriched the lives of our students, nurturing qualities of respect, compassion, and inspiration that align with the core values of our school. Such initiatives embody our commitment to holistic education, shaping compassionate and socially responsible individuals.

Sense of Belonging

Christmas Lunch

The festive spirit echoed through the Qube as pupils and staff gathered for a joyful Christmas lunch. Laughter filled the air as children and staff enjoyed a delicious meal together. Children enjoyed the Christmas music and festive crackers, generously provided by our dedicated PTFA. This thoughtful gesture not only added a touch of merriment but also created a heartwarming environment for the entire school community to come together and celebrate the joy of the season.



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FLOURISHING FUTURES

Thank you to all involved in making this Christmas lunch a memorable and delightful occasion for everyone at Ilsham Academy.

The Willows Marble Treat

The Willows were rewarded for their hard work this term, with a surprise visit to Me and Mrs Jones. The air filled with warmth as the children savoured hot chocolate and chocolate brownies, creating lasting Christmas moments. This week the children have also crafted reindeer food, sprinkling magic onto the festivities. They giggled while creating marshmallow cups, turning simple ingredients into festive delights. We have also painted handprint baubles adorned the room, capturing memories in vibrant colours. The handprints were turned into five little snowmen, with a little rhyme, that can be hung on the Christmas tree in years to come!



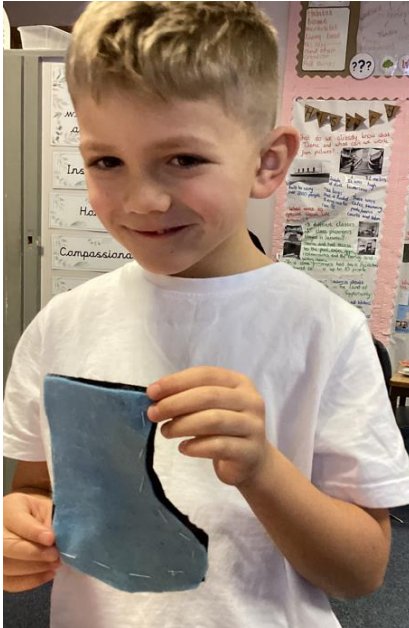
Festive Fun in the Rowans

The Rowans have had a festive fun-filled week full of Christmas crafts. The children joyfully pressed their hands into fresh fallen snow, crafting festive snowmen adorned with the unique imprint of each hand. We hope each handprint will become a cherished keepsake of the Christmas magic. They also had great fun making delicious, edible Christmas themed teacups with marshmallows and candy canes to enjoy, and delicious chocolate marshmallow reindeer.



Sewing in the Beeches

The Year Twos have wowed us with their wonderful perseverance and determination when completing their DT units this week. We were blown away with their sewing skills and were very impressed with the patience they have shown when completing their Christmas stockings. On Thursday, we saw some amazing teamwork as those that were completed helped others in the classroom. Well done, Beeches!



Removing Barriers

Podcasts in The Hollies

In computing, Year 4 students completed their audio recording journey, partnering up to share their favourite things in a whole new way. Children collaborated with their partners to brainstorm, script, recorded and edit their very own podcasts. The children all understood the key purpose and features of a podcast and worked hard on ensuring their recordings were of the best quality they could be, taking into consideration background noise, clarity of voice and no 'uurring and aghhhing'. They loved using the headsets with inbuilt microphones, (bought with funds from our incredible PTFA) and have saved their podcasts to their google drives. Fantastic work Hollies, they all sound amazing!

DT designers in the Maples

The Maples have worked incredibly hard to make and evaluate their night lights this week. They had a few challenges along the way but persevered and created a night light that fit their aim and purpose: to create a night light for the younger years. It was so lovely to see the excitement and passion on their face during all three processes of designing, making and evaluating!

Science in Monkey Puzzles

This week, Year 6 have continued to investigate light. They have conducted experiments to determine the effects of refraction and how light can be split. It was lovely to see the passion and enthusiasm for learning from the children and we are sure that there are some incredible future scientists in our midst!

Realising the Possible

Nativity

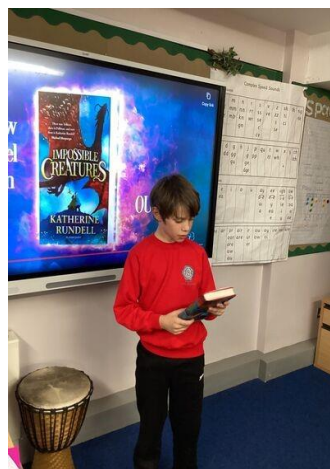
We are delighted to share the success of our heartwarming Nativity performance, which took place on Wednesday evening at St Matthias Church. The stage came alive with the magic of the season, thanks to the incredible participation of our talented children.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our dedicated staff for their unwavering commitment and exceptional guidance in making the Nativity a truly special event. Special recognition is due to Mrs. Guntrip, Miss Grimes, and Miss. Blake, who went above and beyond by facilitating rehearsals after school and dedicating their personal time to enriching the opportunities for our children.

We extend our sincere gratitude to parents and families for their attendance and support, including their invaluable assistance with costumes. The Nativity not only showcased the creative talents of our students but also provided them with moments of prestige, fostering confidence and a sense of accomplishment. We are grateful for the community spirit that made this event a resounding success and look forward to more joyous celebrations in the future.



Reading for Pleasure in the Oaks

This week we have continued to explore a new range of books and authors in the Oaks Class. In our Book Club session, we focussed on the author Katherine Rundell who is already a firm favourite with a number of the class. Two members of the class spoke eloquently about her books and made brilliant recommendations to their peers. We also enjoyed watching some clips of Katherine talking about the inspiration behind some of these texts. It was wonderful to see how many of the class were inspired to read her work following this session.



Wishing you all a joyous and restful
Christmas break filled with warmth and
cherished moments,
Mr Grinsill and The Ilsham Team

School Awards

Class	 Star of the Week	 Presentation Award
Willows	Louie – for trying really hard in his learning. Well done, Louie!	Thea – for painting an amazing Christmas bauble, showing great attention to detail.
Rowans	Elsie- for being courageous and taking part in our Nativity. Your ballet dancing and singing was beautiful!	Olivia - for showing a great improvement in your handwriting and thinking carefully about your letter formation.
Beeches	Holly – for always having the most stunning manners and for consistently helping, supporting and complementing others.	Maxwell – for presenting all work beautifully and for always taking the time to check his work.
Maples	Hugo - for your attitude to towards your learning and your fantastic performance in the school Nativity.	Ysabella – for your dedication to improving your handwriting in all lessons.
Hollies	Dawson- for his attitude towards his learning and the wonderful work he has done in English this week.	Louie – for working on his letter formation and writing consistency. We are seeing improvements, keep it up :-)
Oaks	Issac for working very hard in every lesson and providing brilliant vocabulary ideas during our English lessons.	Bence for making great strides to improve his joined handwriting. It has improved so much through the term!
Monkey Puzzles	We have two Stars of the Week this week. Declan- for both his concentration and focus this week and also for beautiful manners. Well done! Rosalyn for being willing to 'step-in' and support main parts in our Nativity and therefore showing courage. Well done!	Ava- for her careful presentation in all areas of the curriculum. Well done Ava!

Weekly Attendance

Class	Attendance %
The Willows	100
The Rowans	93.3
The Beeches	91.7
The Maples	98.6
The Hollies	94.2
The Oaks	94.7
The Monkey Puzzles	98.1
Whole School	95.76

Diary Dates

8th February – PTFA Valentine's Disco
 23rd February – Fire Service visit Year 2 and Year 5
 28th February – 1st March – Year 4 Residential
 4th & 5th March – PTFA Superhero Stall for Mother's Day
 11th – 15th March – Scholastic Book Fair
 18th April x 5 weeks (Thursdays) – Year 5 Swimming
 22nd – 25th April – Year 5 Bikeability Level 2