

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

Dear families

It has been wonderful to welcome you all back after the half-term break. Before sharing this week's newsletter, may I please take the opportunity to remind you of the Online safety/safeguarding risks workshop being delivered to parents next Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 2:30pm. Please remember to try to let us know if you are coming, via the link below, so that we can prepare accordingly: <https://forms.office.com/e/qwR2WY3KY3> Thank you to those who have already replied.

### **Stronger Together**

#### **Trust Lead Visit**

We welcomed Tracey Cleverley, our Trust Lead, to Ilsham on Wednesday. Tracey spent time with us sharing in the amazing learning experiences happening throughout our school. She engaged with children in each class, and was particularly impressed by the writing in The Willows. Additionally, Tracey offered invaluable support to Ilsham Academy as part of our wider trust network. Together, we are committed to nurturing a thriving learning community for all our students.

#### **Design and Technology Development**

Our staff team came together on Monday for a professional development meeting focused on enhancing our approach to teaching design and technology. Led by Miss Blake, we delved into a thorough review of our curriculum intent and explored strategies to empower our children in experimenting, making conscious choices based on findings, and effectively following through with their plans. This collaborative effort reflects our commitment to providing our students with the best possible learning experiences in design and technology. We look forward to implementing these strategies and fostering a creative and innovative learning environment for our children.



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## **FLOURISHING FUTURES**

## **Sense of Belonging**

### **Ethos Day**

As you may be aware, last half term some of our children from Year 3 to Year 6 took part in an Ethos Day with other children from across our Torbay Hub, in collaboration with St. Matthias. It was wonderful to hear how, last Sunday, the lighthouses which the children had created were shared with the congregation and their work recognised within the community. Thank you to the team at St. Matthias for continuing to support the work that we do here at school and for championing our children.



### **Reading for Pleasure in the Hollies**

We had a lovely morning on Tuesday selecting our expert librarians. Each child wrote down their favourite book, and explained why they loved it so much. Some brave souls even came up to the front of the class to persuade their peers that their book was the best book of all time. It was brilliant to see and hear their enthusiasm and children got to learn about books that they may never have considered in the past. Several children even made direct appeals to their friends promising that if they read the book, they would love it. We ended by voting for our favourite, and most persuasive, expert librarians, and ended up with two with the same number of votes. Lucky us!



## **Removing Barriers**

### **Maths Development Day**

On Thursday, Miss Grimes, our Maths Lead, dedicated her time to observe and evaluate the Maths learning across all classes at Ilsham Academy. From engaging with students to reviewing books, Miss Grimes gathered valuable insights that will be instrumental in enhancing our Maths curriculum. Additionally, this feedback will be shared within our school trust, allowing us to spread expertise and foster continuous improvement across all our partner schools.

### **Reach Outdoors in Year 6**

Year 6 embarked on an enriching adventure with Reach Outdoors this week, immersing themselves in a day filled with climbing and bushcraft activities. Through this unique experience, our children had the privilege of learning outdoors, fostering a deeper connection with nature while

honing invaluable skills. As they conquered climbing challenges and delved into bushcraft techniques, they not only expanded their knowledge but also cultivated important metacognitive abilities, learning to reflect on and improve their own learning processes. Additionally, this outdoor excursion provided a platform for them to develop leadership skills, as they collaborated, communicated, and problem-solved in a dynamic outdoor environment. We are proud of their resilience, curiosity, and enthusiasm in embracing this opportunity for holistic growth, and we look forward to further opportunities throughout the rest of this academic year.



## **Realising the Possible**

### **Sowing Sweet Peas in the Rowans**

This week Miss Davies brought in some sweet peas for us to plant. She told the Rowans that once the seeds started growing, they would need a strong and sturdy structure to grow and climb up. So as designers and constructors, the Rowans got to work at researching different garden structures. They thought about what the structures are made from and what sort of designs they liked and disliked. As a whole class they then created a design brief thinking about: what are they making? What do they want to achieve with the design? Who is the target audience? And what should the product do?





### Geography in the Beeches

Excitingly, the Beeches have started their new geography unit! Over the next six weeks, the Year Twos will be exploring the physical and human features of two contrasting locations and will be discussing how these features affect land use. As an introduction to our new unit, the Beeches used a range of geographical terms to identify physical features of different areas; some of these words included beach, cliff, forest, hill, mountain, sea, coast, ocean, river, soil and vegetation. The children sorted a whole range of images into physical (naturally occurring) features and manmade features before using their geography skills to label various maps and images.

### Symmetry in The Willows

The Willows had an engaging week exploring symmetry both inside and outside the classroom. They delved into the concept through natural objects, pictures, and even their own bodies, discovering the beauty of symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes. Using resources from the snack table, they crafted intricate symmetrical patterns before enjoying their fruit and milk. The week concluded with the creation of stunning symmetrical butterflies, showcasing the children's creativity and understanding. Well done, Willows, on another week of remarkable learning experiences!



### Science in the Oaks

This week, we have started work on our new science topic – Earth and Space. Our focus this week was understanding the solar system and our place within it. The children thoroughly enjoyed using Play Doh to represent the solar system; this activity challenged the children to apply their understanding of fractions to compare the relative sizes of the eight planets and develop a more detailed understanding of the solar system in which they live. Following this, the class used their deeper thinking skills to formulate questions about space. I have already been very impressed with the children's enthusiasm for, and prior knowledge of, this area of science.



### Writers in Monkey Puzzles

In Year 6, our children have been busy honing their persuasive writing skills with a delightful twist! Engaging in the art of persuasion, they've tackled the topic of "Pet Peeves" with creativity and humour. Their informal - yet persuasive - texts not only showcase their hard work but also demonstrate a mastery of language that is both entertaining and compelling. Prepare to be amused as they skilfully articulate their frustrations with a dash of wit! Please do take the time to ask your child what they have been writing about- the pieces have delighted staff members!

### PE in the Maples

The Maples enjoyed their first PE session of the half term with Kinetics this week. They were excited to see that they would be focusing on building up their throwing skills. In this week's lesson, the children focused on learning how to 'shot put' which involved them angling their arms in a way that would allow them to throw it as far as possible. By the end of the lesson, the children were ready for an element of competition to see who could throw it the furthest and red team came out on top!

Enjoy the weekend,  
Mr Grinsill and The Ilsham Team

### Weekly Attendance



| Class              | Attendance % |
|--------------------|--------------|
| The Willows        | 96.5         |
| The Rowans         | 97.3         |
| The Beeches        | 97.3         |
| The Maples         | 97.1         |
| The Hollies        | 97.5         |
| The Oaks           | 97.5         |
| The Monkey Puzzles | 94.9         |
| Whole School       | 96.9         |

### Diary Dates

**Next week:** 27<sup>th</sup> February – Safeguarding Parent Workshop  
28<sup>th</sup> February - 1<sup>st</sup> March - Year 4 Residential

Later on, this term:  
4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> March - PTFA Superhero Stall for Mother's Day  
7<sup>th</sup> March - World Book Day  
11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> March - Scholastic Book Fair  
21<sup>st</sup> March - Fire Service visit Year 2 and Year 5  
26<sup>th</sup> March – Rowans and Beeches trip to RAMM, Exeter  
18<sup>th</sup> April x 5 weeks (Thursdays) - Year 5 Swimming  
22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> April - Year 5 Bikeability Level 2

## School Awards

| Class          |  <b>Star of the Week</b>   |  <b>Presentation Award</b>                    |
|----------------|---|--|
| Willows        | Frank, for his determination and focused concentration in his learning. He has approached all new challenges with a positive attitude. Well done, Frank!  | Hugo, for taking his time and thinking carefully about the presentation of all his work. Well done, Hugo!                      |
| Rowans         | Hattie – For being courageous and showing determination when finding her work challenging.  | Zofia- for a great improvement in her letter formation and trying really hard to keep her letters sitting on the line.         |
| Beeches        | Gaia – for contributing positively towards class discussions and for always supporting others in the class.   | Izzy – for always presenting her work so beautifully in all lessons across the curriculum!                                     |
| Maples         | Eoghan – for your outstanding writing in our whole class reading lesson. Your poetry verse reflected your creativity!   | Indie – for always presenting your work so beautifully in every lesson.  |
| Hollies        | Mason – For always having the most beautiful manners and for challenging himself this week across all subjects. Well done!  | Scarlett – for having a much more consistent approach to her letter formation and presentation. You are doing a wonderful job! |
| Oaks           | Our star this week is Issac, who always gives 100% in every lesson and has impressed me with the improvements he is showing in his writing and his new-found love of reading. Keep it up Issac! | Sapphire- for always working hard to present her work across the curriculum neatly and with care.                              |
| Monkey Puzzles | Victoria and Rafe- both children have worked incredibly hard this week, demonstrated how to be an inspirational learner and have been role models for the class. Well done!                     | Jayden- for working incredibly hard to continually develop his handwriting. Well done!   |