

THE PALMER ACADEMY

Spring 1 Celebration Letter 2024

I trust this message finds you well. As we approach the end of this half term, we want to share with you the incredible learning experiences that have taken place in our school. The students have been engaged and enthusiastic, and we hope you enjoy seeing some of their work in this letter.

Today, we bid a temporary farewell to Mrs. Fernandez as she leaves for her maternity leave. We extend our warmest wishes to her and her family, hoping for good health and happiness during this special time. We look forward to her return in the future.

This week, we are delighted to welcome Mrs. Guillesser to our school community. She will be taking on the role of teaching Year 1 in Donaldson Class starting from February 19th. We are confident that her expertise and passion for education will greatly benefit our pupils.

Additionally, we are excited to announce the return of Mrs. Billins on February 26th. After her maternity leave, she will be back in action, teaching Year 5 alongside Mrs. Taphouse. We're thrilled to have her back and eager to witness the positive impact she will continue to have on our childrens' learning journeys.

As you are aware, parents evenings scheduled for March 5th and 6th. This will be a fantastic opportunity for you to meet with the teachers, discuss your child's progress, and gain valuable insights into their learning experiences.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in your child's education. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming parents' evenings and wish you a restful and enjoyable break.

Anne Higginbotham




Headteacher

Nursery

This term in Nursery has been amazing!

We have had lots of new children join us and it has been wonderful to make new friends! We have enjoyed playing games with each other and spending time together!



Our Topic this term has been Once Upon A Time. We have looked at the fairytales of Little Red Riding Hood, The Gingerbread Man and The Three Billy Goats Gruff. We have thought about the characters, the setting and about what happens next, creating wonderful artwork and story maps! Some of these are on display in our classrooms and in the corridors!



In Maths, we have been thinking about counting and subitising. We have also been thinking about the numbers 4 and 5, and have had fun watching Ten Town and singing along to the songs!



We have also been thinking about big, small, tall and long and have spent a lot of time outside exploring this. Some of us used different size buckets and explored how much rainwater could fill them!



We cannot wait for next term, to spend more time learning with our friends and to learn about Growing and Changing!



Reception

This term the children came back from the Christmas break to find that our classrooms were a mess. The children looked at the clues and decided that the tiger from The Tiger Who Came to Tea, the bear from We Are Going on a Bear Hunt and Mog from the Mog book series had been in and made a mess. The children couldn't believe that they had not tidied up after themselves!



Our topic this term is STORY TIME, the children enjoyed the visit from the story teller. They learnt how to use drama to retell the story of We Are Going on a Bear Hunt.



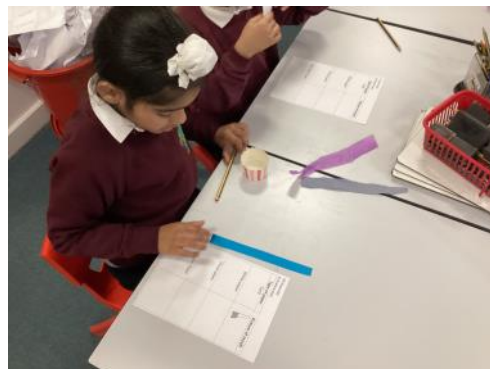
This term in maths we have been learning to identify odds and evens. To do this we have been using Numicon and tens frames, the children knew that an even number is made up of pairs and the odd number has one left over.



Year 1

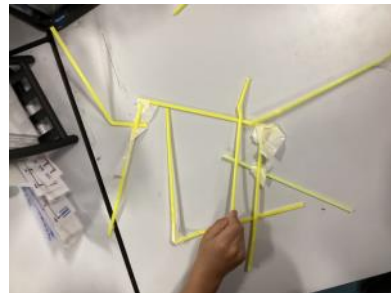
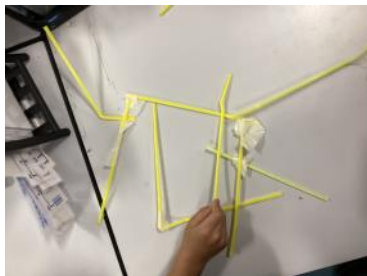
Geography

This term, we have been learning about London. First we explored the different landmarks around the capital city. We looked at their locations and started drawing simple maps to describe where they are. We also collected lots of different recyclable materials and used these to create models of some famous London landmarks. Finally, we learned about the difference between human features of London, like the Tower of London and the physical features of London like the River Thames. We have enjoyed our topic on London and are looking forward to next term when we learn about nurses.



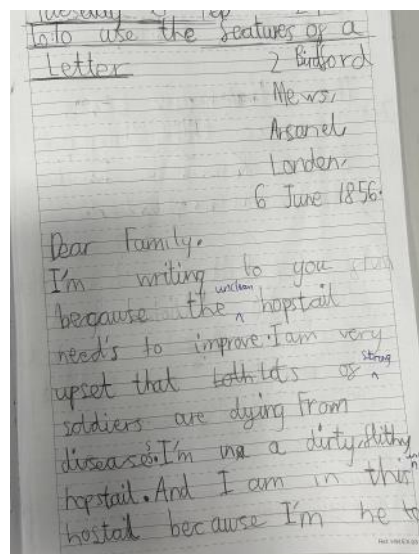
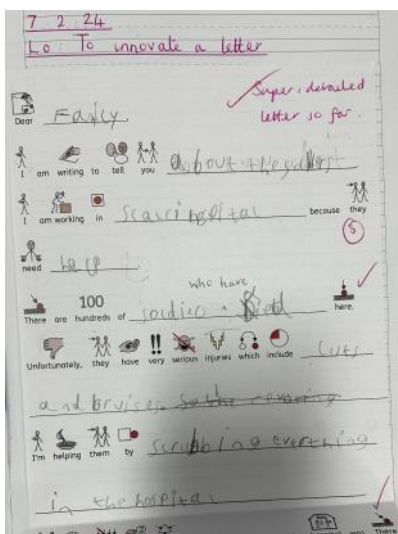
Science

In Science we have continued to learn about materials. This term, we have carried out different tests and experiments to determine which materials are best suited to do different tasks. We especially enjoyed reading the story of the Three Little Pigs and investigating which materials are best suited to build a house. We built houses out of straws, bricks and paper and realised that bricks were the best material. Following on from this we became scientists and tried to determine which type of paper was the most absorbent. We did this because we needed to understand that even though the material is paper, there were different types suitable for different purposes. Next term, we will be learning all about plants!



Year 2

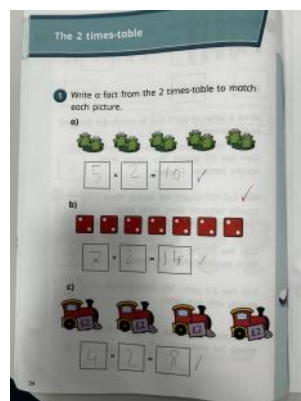
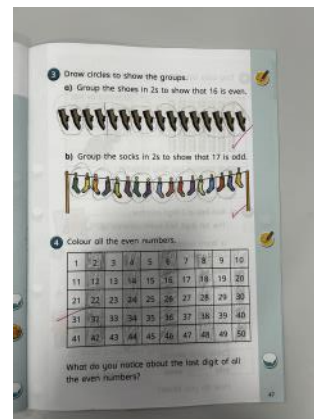
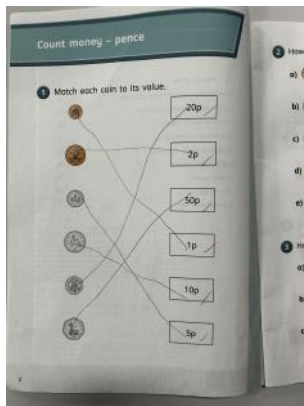
In English this half term, we have been learning about narratives and letters! Children have enjoyed using their imagination to create their own pieces of writing and managed to write in role as Florence Nightingale.



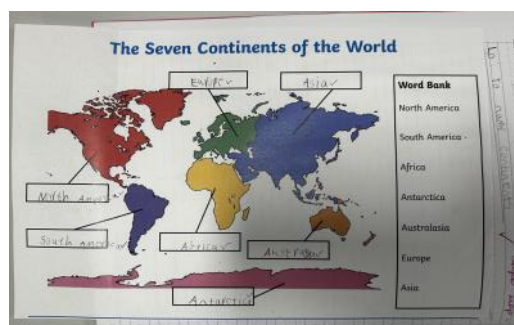
In science year 2 have been focusing on the topic Animals Including Humans. The children have learnt some really interesting facts about animal offspring and what animals need to survive. We also completed an experiment to test what effect exercise has on the human body.



In maths, we have been focusing on money and multiplication and division. During our money topic, the children used practical methods to increase their understanding of making amounts and calculating change. Practical methods were also used to figure out multiplication and division sentences.

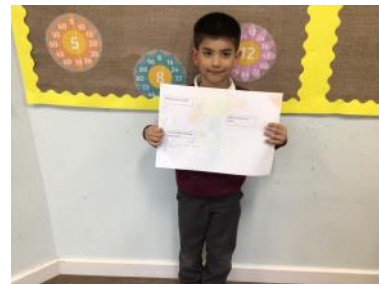
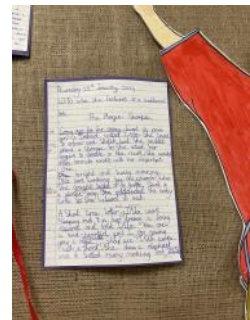


In geography our topics this half term was 'Wonderful World'. Children learnt all seven continents and explored their population



Year 3

Hi, Year 3 have had a great term, they have thoroughly enjoyed the story of the Magic Paintbrush. They innovated their own versions using different characters and settings. They have now created their own non chronological reports based on unicorns and dragons. They make fascinating reads. In geography we have been learning all about volcanoes and tectonic plates. We loved finding all about Pompei ! In P.E we have been finding out how to work as a team and follow instructions to be part of team sports. In Science we have found out all about plants and did our own experiment to find out what happens to plants in the dark ! A great term ! Well done Year 3



This term, Benjamin class have been learning all about plants and what they need to grow.

We have had a lot of fun and some amazing learning opportunities during this topic, but we especially enjoyed carrying out our experiment to find out exactly what a plant needed in order to grow.

We planted some seeds, and then left our plants in various locations around the classroom. We found that without light, the plant did grow but it didn't go green! We also found that the plant without water only grew a little bit and the leaves were very brown. The plant that we left in the fridge didn't grow at all, teaching us that plants definitely need heat!

In our final lesson of the term, we create beautiful posters showing everything we had learned throughout the topic.



I am very proud of everything Benjamin class have achieved this term, from our fantastic weaving designs in art to our magnificent unicorn descriptions and dragon non-chronological reports in writing.

Year 4

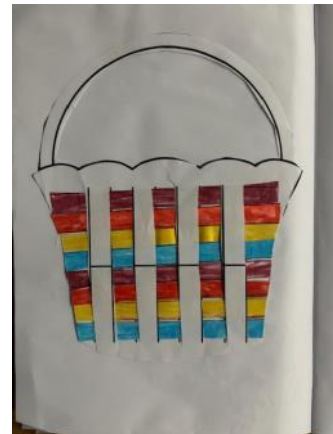
Geography:

This term Year 4 have been studying Spain and looking at how it compares geographically to the UK! We've learnt about the physical features like the Pyrenees and the human features like Sagrada Familia. We've created posters, leaflets and tried creating some Flamenco fans!

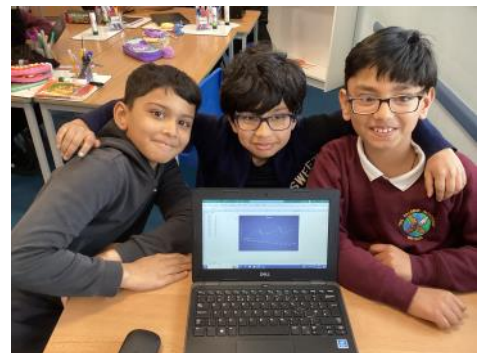
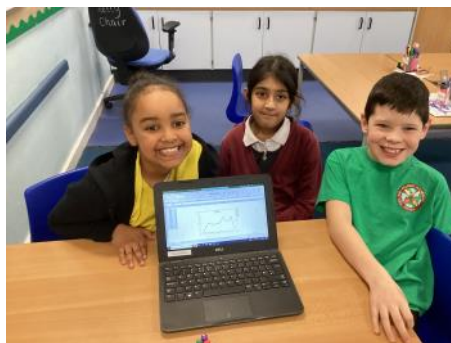


Art:

We've been researching Vivienne Westwood this half term in the aim to learn from her creative techniques and pattern to create our own textiles product. We will be using weaving as a design and construction technique, here are some of our paper practises!



In science this term, we have been learning all about sound. We have studied how sounds are produced, how the ear hears a sound and the different parts of the ear and what their function is. In an experiment we tested whether making the pinnae (ear flaps) bigger affected the volume of sound. Check out the pictures below



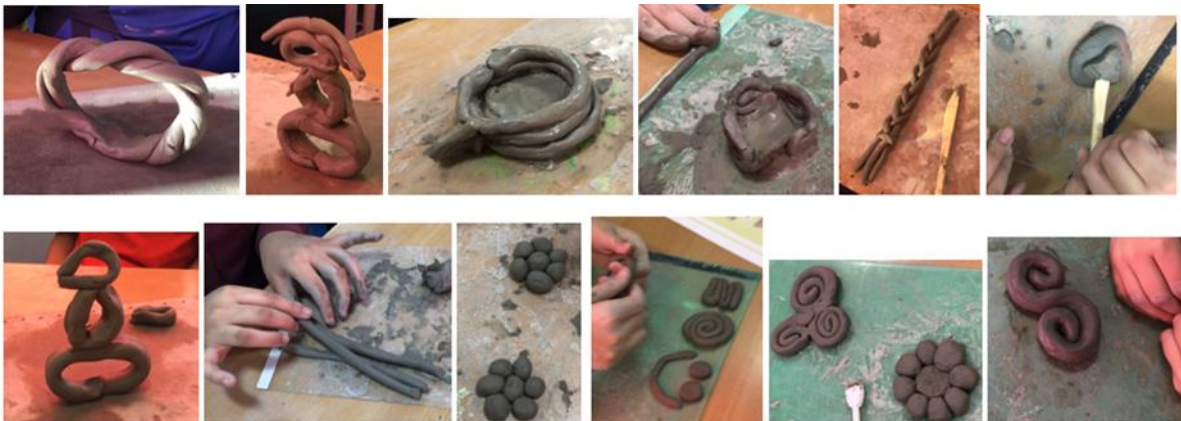
Year 4 have been learning how collect, record and present data in our Computing lessons. We thought of a question we wanted to know more about, for example 'What is your favourite ice cream?', and then recorded everyone's answers on a tally chart. After we used the software Excel to make bar graphs and line graphs.

Year 5

This half term, Year 5 have written some fantastic traditional tales in English. Recently, we've also been showing off our journalism skills by writing brilliant news reports inspired by Michael's adventure in Kensuke's Kingdom (the Michael Morpurgo book we read in autumn term).



In our art lessons, the children have been super sculptors! We have explored the architecture of Antoni Gaudi and have used his work as inspiration to create our own sculptures. Just like Gaudi, our sculptures have been inspired by nature. Can you see what we've been inspired by in the pictures below?



In geography, we have been exploring coastlines. We have learnt about erosion and deposition and how these processes shape our coasts. We have also reflected on what life is like for people in coastal towns in the UK and how tourism impacts them differently throughout the year. We designed our own improvements to a coastal town.



In science, we have been learning about human life cycles. We have learnt about how we change on our journey from being a baby to being an older adult. We have also learnt about how a baby changes before it is even born by comparing the size of a foetus at different weeks to the size of different fruits/vegetables. We were also really interested to learn about the gestation periods of different mammals – 22 months for an elephant and only 20 days for a mouse! We learnt that often the bigger the animal the longer the gestation.

The PE focus has been based on team building skills that can support the children in game related activities and sports. Communicating effectively to share instructions and encourage others produced positive results when faced with fun challenges such as transferring objects, for example a mat, only using feet. Year 5 discovered new strategies, and how these apply to competitive environments. Well done everyone and now we will be able to use them next term when our new topics begin – tag rugby and football.

In PHSE we have been thinking about our hopes and dreams for the future. We finished this off by writing our own inspirational quotes.

Year 6

It has been yet another wonderful term in Year 6. The children have come in with a very positive mindset towards learning and have made some amazing progress. We are all so proud of them and the responsibility they have been taking in making strides in the different areas of the curriculum.

In Art, we have been looking at the work of Pop Art artist Andy Warhol. The children have really enjoyed learning about this art style and had a go at creating their own drawings of some of their favourite things. They look amazing! Looks like we have lots of future artists in Year 6! They will go on to create a print from repeatedly stamping their own design.

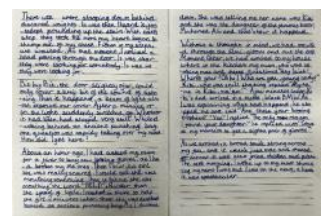
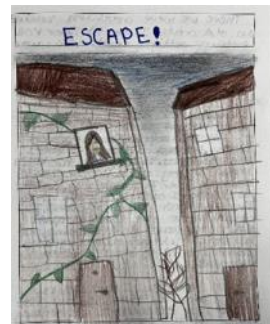


We have started to use workbooks in Maths and it has had a very positive impact on our learning. We have continued to broaden our Maths subject knowledge and have shown resilience in every lesson. It has been truly wonderful to see the children's reasoning skills improve, as they become more resilient and enquiring. Decimals, percentages and fractions have been the stars of our Maths lessons and we have had the opportunities to see the links between the different subject areas. Just like last term, we have realized how important it is to know your times tables really well.

Science was all about humans, living things and microorganisms. We have learned all about classification keys and the importance of grouping animals depending on their characteristics. Did you know that the scientific name for a wolf is *Canis Lupus*? We created our own classification keys in different formats and learned about the names given to the different animals. In our last sessions, we looked at microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, and were surprised by their different uses in our daily lives.

In Geography, we have been learning about our planet, particularly the oceans and their vast sea life. We learned so much about our 'Blue Planet' and how to protect it. Our topic book *Ocean* deepened our understanding of the seas and sparked our curiosity. We had lots of engaging discussions about different topics, such as coral reefs, the depths of the ocean and our powerful person, Ellen McArthur.

Have a look at our topic display for this half-term! We all worked hard on producing a bright and impactful display that would celebrate our learning of the Geography unit. We cannot wait to continue to add to it as the weeks go by.



In English,

we have been working hard on making sure that we get out of our comfort zone, by using precise vocabulary, varying sentence structures and a range of punctuation. Our determination to improve our writing has paid off and we have seen some amazing pieces from our two units. We started by writing an instructional piece on how to survive being a Year 6 teacher. Needless to say, that the Y6 team took all of our advice on board and have been feeling much more energised after reading all of our suggestions!

We also revisited narrative writing and have just finished publishing some outstanding suspense stories based off our model text 'Kidnapped' by Pie Corbett. We have explored flashbacks and how to engage the readers by just hinting at the outcomes of our story. We have done really well at 'showing not telling' and presenting our work as neatly as possible. It has been truly amazing to see all children bouncing ideas off each other and giving their classmates feedback on their writing; a wonderful example of collaboration in Y6.

Football & Sports Holiday Camps

February Half Term

Football Plus Camps

Bracknell · Caversham · Woodley · Slough

Multi Sports Camps

Woodley · Spencer's Wood · Caversham
Slough · Reading · Maidenhead · Wokingham

**£25
Per Day***

*MULTI DAY
DISCOUNTS
AVAILABLE

Girls Football

Woodley



u-sports.co.uk/berkshire-holiday-camps





Sport Together Berkshire CIC

FESTIVAL of INCLUSIVITY

at **READING FC TRAINING DOME**

Friday, 16 February 2024

A multisport event at Reading FC Training Dome for children and adults with physical disabilities, learning or neurological conditions. Sports include **Basketball, Cricket, Football, Hockey, Rugby, "Start Together Finish Whenever" 1 mile event.**

**TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE
SCAN THE QR CODE FOR INFO**

For further information email
sporttogetherberks@gmail.com

SPORTTOGETHERBERKS.CO.UK



Attendance Information

Attendance is a key priority for our school this term. We want to ensure that all children's attendance percentages are in line or above national average of 97%. Children with an attendance of 97% above are more likely to be happier attending school, make better progress and eventually achieve better in formal exams. Please see below how even missing a few days of school can lead to many hours of learning missed

Yearly Attendance	Days Missed	Hours Missed
100%	0	0
97%	6	30
95%	10	50
90%	20	100
80%	40	200

Whole School Attendance is currently 92.1%

Nursery		Year R		Year 1		Year 2	
AM	PM	Kerr	Rosen	Cole	Donaldson	Ahlberg	Butterworth
93.3%	93.5%	92.2%	83.5%	96.3%	90.4%	86.9%	90.4%
Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
Benjamin	King-Smith	Binch	Pullman	Hughes	Morpurgo	Horowitz	Lewis
92.2%	91.9%	88.5%	90.1%	95.4%	89.4%	92.7%	92.1%

Well done Cole and Hughes Classes

Attendance Raffle

You have to be in it to win it! If you attend school every day you will automatically be put into our attendance raffle which will be drawn on a Friday afternoon. A winner from each class will be selected and win a special prize. We are also now holding a half term raffle for those children who have 100 percent attendance where they can win prizes such as amazon vouchers, roblox points, art kits and pencil cases. All the children have to do to be in with a chance of winning is to be in school every day

Diary Dates

9th February End of term

19th February Pupils back to school

5th and 6th March– Parent evenings– please remember to book on Arbor before 8am Monday 4th March

7th March—World book day

Parents reminders

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Thank you for kind donations towards the NSPCC number day, we raised £268!

Please do not use the car gates to walk in and out of the Northumberland Avenue entrance, this is for everyone's safety.

We would encourage you all to use zebra crossing whenever possible when crossing Northumberland Avenue.

Have a good break– see you on the 19th February

