



The Layston Newsletter



July 2025

Value:

We have all explored the value **trust** through our transition day visits, where staff and pupils have been developing new **trusting relationships ready for September**. This will continue into September. Please look out for **transition videos** to support your children at the beginning of September. These will be put on the class pages on the website for you to share with your child.

Spirituality:

We have a new spirituality display in the hall to remind us all what 'spirituality' means.

Awards:




PE - We are delighted to announce that we have achieved the School Games **GOLD Mark Award** for the 2024/25 academic year. Well done Miss Croucher and RTYFC!



Attendance:

We continue to prioritise attendance and are delighted to celebrate all the children who have achieved 96% attendance and above over the Summer Term (up to 18th July). In total there are 76 awards for 96% attendance and above.

Certificates have been awarded as follows:

	Golden Certificates = 100% Attendance	43
	Silver Certificates = 98% Attendance	18
	Bronze Certificates = 96% Attendance	15

Overall percentage for children across whole school is **93%**.

SEND:

Parents of pupils with additional needs had the opportunity to meet the **new SENDCo, Donna Rolt**, on Wednesday 16th July. We would like to say a huge thank you to Christie Suchley for donating these delicious and beautifully made cakes and cookies for everyone to enjoy.

**Goodbyes:**

We **bid farewell to our Year 4 children** and we wish them good luck as they begin the next step of their learning journey at middle school. We know that they will **continue to shine** and do us all proud. They have been **compassionate, thoughtful and resilient**.

We also say goodbye to Mrs Betley and Mr Strahan. Mrs Betley will be leaving to start a new **SENCO** role at Millfield and develop her play therapy business. Mr Strahan will be leaving to begin a new chapter away from teaching in school. We wish them good luck for the future and we thank them for all their hard work this year.

Reminder:

We are ending the summer term on Wednesday 23rd July at 1:30pm. The new school term starts on Monday 8th September at 8:45am.

As ever, it is a privilege to work with your wonderful children so thank you all for entrusting them to our care. On behalf of all the staff at Layston we wish you all a safe, relaxing and enjoyable summer break and look forward to seeing you back at school in September.

Reception

We have had such a busy half term! The children have been really fascinated in learning about mini-beasts and the natural world. We have had much excitement observing our caterpillars turn into butterflies and then release them! We have enjoyed observing the tadpoles as they change in forest school.



We had a fabulous morning when Garg came to visit and show us his different animals! The children were so careful and safe with the animals.



We have been working hard in our phonics, to apply our knowledge into our writing.

In maths we have been consolidating number bonds to 10, doubling and sharing.

We have had a fabulous year and we wish the children all the best as they move up into Year 1!

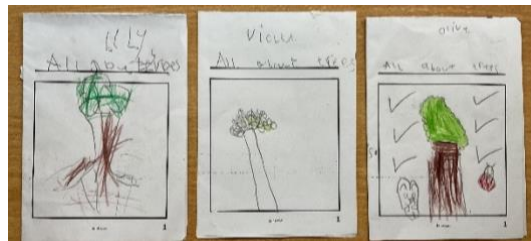
Have a lovely summer

Year 1

We have had a busy half term creating some amazing memories! It has been lovely to see all the children engaged in their learning.



In Maths, we have been learning about money. The children have been learning to count and recognise coins and notes. The children have also been learning about time. Telling the time to the hour and half hour. Year 1 have been amazing when explaining their answers in more detail, using their sentence stems to support their learning.



In English, the children have been enjoying reading *The Magic and Mystery of Trees* By Jen Green. Creating fact file booklets. The children have also been exposed to rhyming poems, creating their own Dr Seuss poem. As always, the children have enjoyed role-playing showing their fantastic acting skills!

We finished off the term with our trip to Shepreth Zoo! Enjoyed by all. The children were all superstars representing Layston School. It has been a pleasure to see all the children blossom as individuals and they have been a pleasure to teach. Wishing them every success when moving into year 2!



Year 2

What a jam-packed half term we've had in Year 2!



In History, we have been using sources to learn about changes to Seaside Holidays over the last 100 years. The children have produced some lovely information posters about seaside holidays in the Victorian times and the 1960s.



In Art, we studied the work of textile artist Eva Sonaike, and created our own textile designs in her style. There are definitely some budding interior designers in Year 2!

Our D and T project this term was to design and sew a monster hand puppet. The children created some fantastically inventive designs! Lots of problem solving and resilience was demonstrated too, as children grappled with sewing their puppets together.



Finally, we enjoyed a trip to the Royal Gunpowder mills, to support our Science learning on Habitats. The children really impressed the staff there with their knowledge!

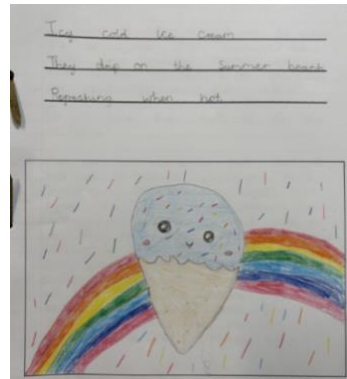
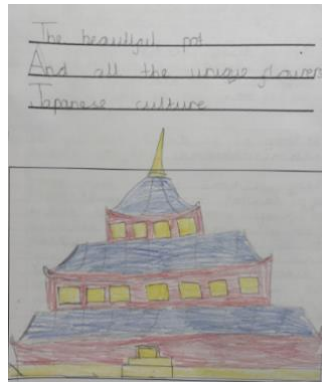
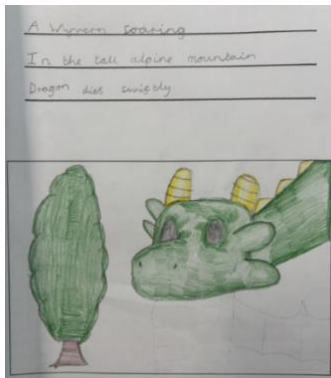


Year 3

We have had a lovely half term in Year 3, the children have worked extremely hard and that has been shown across all areas of the curriculum.

In English, we have explored persuasion texts. We finished the unit by writing a letter and speech to Tesco, encouraging them to stop the use of plastic bags. We then moved on to looking at Haiku poetry, which we thoroughly enjoyed. The children were able to write and illustrate their own haiku poems, which they loved!

Here are some examples:



In History, we have been exploring the History of Buntingford! We have used the chrome books to research about historical buildings in Buntingford and historic individuals linked to the town. We enjoyed a walk around Buntingford identifying any of the historic buildings we recognised from our research.

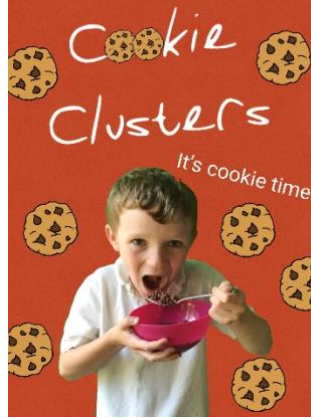
We have also been busy in art this half term. Where we have explored the work of Orla Kiely and the children have used paint and printing skills to create their own piece of work inspired by Orla Kiely.



It has been a pleasure to teach Year 3 this year and I am very proud of all the children for the hard work and progress that has been made. I am sure this will continue into Year 4 and I look forward to watching them continue to flourish.

Year 4

Well that was a busy half term! In D&T, the children designed and made their own cereal boxes using a combination of the iPads and Chromebooks. They also made bread rolls!



The children had a great time at Hudnall Park. I'm still recovering!



Oh and we still have the leavers' service on Tuesday next week! We hope you can make it.

Class of 2025, you have been awesome! Good luck in the future! ☺

I am also moving on after 12 unforgettable years here. It has been a real privilege, and I will always look back on this time with pride. I would like to thank everyone for the warmth and support they have shown over the years. Goodbye and best wishes!

PE, Eco Warriors and Outdoor Learning

We had a wonderful half term, with lots of sporting success! Firstly, the whole school participated in Sports Day which was a huge success. I am extremely proud of the resilience, determination and courage shown by all. Furthermore, a selected Y3/4 rounders team managed to win the inter school's rounders tournament which took place at Freman College- well done guys! The shield will be displayed proudly within school. We have also seen huge progress and development in everyone's rounders skills during PE lessons and Mr Johnson has been very impressed!

I look forward to continuing this positivity and hard work in the new school year!

We have also been awarded a *GOLD* school games mark for this academic year which is a reflection of our hard work and dedication to PE at Layston.

Miss Croucher

Our Eco Warriors and Miss Croucher have worked hard this year to continue to develop a whole school approach to sustainability and being eco-friendly. I am extremely proud of all the children for being excellent role models around the school. I look forward to continuing this next year with a new group of children!

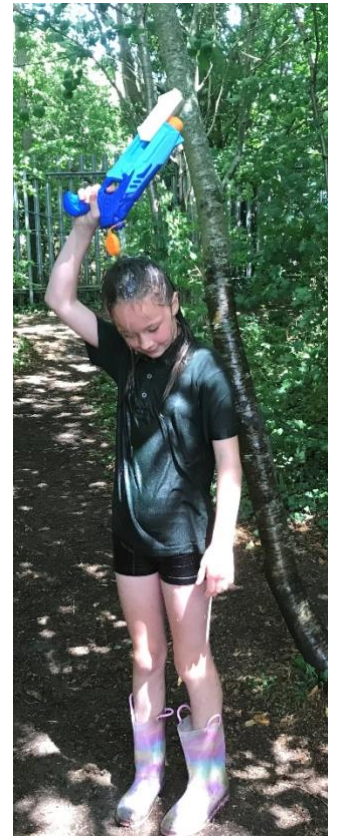
Miss Croucher

Forest School

It has been a busy half term in Forest School, at times a little hot but there's no better place to be in a heatwave than under the cover of the trees. As well as learning about sticky weed, ladybirds and pond creatures, we have been creative with photosensitive paper and celebrated the Summer solstice. We've built dens, climbed trees and played with water. A huge thank you to Jill Digby for many years of support with Forest School. A thank you also to Gemma Edlestone for joining us. Layston pupils have shown yet again, their resilience and sense of fun and adventure. I look forward to more nature based learning and adventure in September.



*Water Week
2025*



Governors

The full governing board ("FGB") has met twice this term as usual and looked at a number of topics. The school budget has been particularly challenging to set this year and like 90% of other schools we have had to set a deficit budget. This means we will be spending a significant part of our reserves in order to maintain the quality of education. Unless Government is able to change its current approach to school funding, next year is likely to be even more challenging.

As part of our School Development Plan we have continued to progress the areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted report last year. Pupil progress and achievement outcomes have been pleasing in many areas. However, outcomes for both reading and writing are still not where we would like them to be in some year groups. As a result, we have invested further in our use of the Read Write Inc phonics scheme and next year will be using small cross-year groups as part of this scheme to enable greater focus.

At our last meeting the governors heard feedback on the latest survey of parent views. This had a very good response rate and a pleasing 92% of respondents said they would recommend the school to others. Children were happy, behaved well and felt safe. The variety of the curriculum and the provision for SEND were strengths. Communication with parents was the area attracting the most requests for improvement, including more proactive updates on pupil progress. Suggestions for how communication could be improved were also made at the Parent Chat session I attended last month and hopefully you will already have seen some of these implemented in the regular Head's Letters.

Governors took the opportunity at our last meeting to say thank you to Mrs Betley for everything she has done for the school and for the children over the last 14 years. I will also be joining the last Collective Worship of term to say thank you to both her and Mr Strahan on behalf of the Governors. We are then looking forward to welcoming their replacements Mr Harwood and Mrs Rolt to the school next term following a very successful recruitment campaign. Please do offer them your full support as they get up to speed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to FOLS for all the work they have done to support the school this year, both putting on events and raising funds to support enrichment activities for the children, and to all those who volunteer to help. Without your input the school would be a poorer place in all senses of the word.

If you have any comments or questions please do speak to any of the governors.

Colin Wilson,
Chair of Governors

FOLS

FOLS have had a very busy half term, mostly planning for our summer fair.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support, to all the volunteers who turned up early to help set up, who ran stalls, and who stayed late to help tidy up.

Thank you to Miss Croucher, Mrs Foster and Mr Strahan for daring to take the stocks. You are great sports and the children loved throwing sponges at you 🥰!!

And thank you to all of our lovely families for showing up and supporting FOLS.

The Fair was a huge success and all the children seemed to have lots of fun.



We've also had cake sales, sweet sales and Sports Day to enjoy too!

We have had a great year and would like to thank you all for your continued support to Friends of Layston School.

**FOLS 2024/2025
FUNDS RAISED**

£4231.80

YR 2
CAKE
SALE
£209.45

DISCOS
£744.72

XMAS
ARTWORK
£113

PRE
LOVED
UNIFORM
£39.84

XMAS
FAIR
£1529.25

YR 3
CAKE
SALE
£191.25

YR 1
CAKE
SALE
£210.95

EASTER
TOMBOLA
£31.60

MAD
HAIR
DAY
£129.16

XMAS
PLAY
£277.24

SUMMER
FAIR
£566.29

YR 24
SWEET
STALL
£55

SPORTS
DAY
£51.20

YR R
CAKE
SALE
£82.85

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SCHOOL... £2626.11

Y3
ART
RACK
£89.99

BLACK
HISTORY
WORKSHOP
£300

FOREST
SCHOOL
CAMERA
£109.98

XMAS PLAY
COSTUMES
£175.44

SCHOOL
STATIONERY
£94.90

SCIENCE
WORKSHOP
£549

SPORTS
DAY ICE
POPS
£12.80

HISTORY
DAYS
£544

CLASS
RAFFLE
PRIZES
£350

XMAS
CLASS
PARTIES
£150

Y4
LEAVERS
£250

If you think you would like to get involved or just want to chat to someone and find out more about it feel free to message via our facebook page @friendsoflayston or email us on friendsoflaystonschool@gmail.com

We would love to see some new faces on the committee next year so please consider joining us. Drop us an email at friendsoflaystonschool@gmail.com.

We will be having our AGM in October and will give the date early September.

We hope you all have the best summer,

From FOLS