



July 2026

Head's desk

Value:

Our Christian Value this half term was 'Justice'. The children explored stories from the bible to help deepen their understanding of the value. Justice supports the promotion of British Values and diversity, equality and inclusion.



Spirituality

The warm weather has given us opportunities this half term to spend time outdoors and observe nature more closely. Many children have spotted birds' nests around the school grounds and have enjoyed watching parent birds busy feeding and caring for their young. These moments remind us of the beauty, resilience and interconnectedness of the natural world. Spirituality is often found in these simple moments of awe and wonder - watching a bird protect its nest, hearing birdsong in the morning, or noticing the colours and sounds of summer. When we stop and pay attention, we can develop a deeper appreciation of the world and our place within it.

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better." - Albert Einstein.

Awards:

We are proud to announce that our school has achieved the **School Games Gold Mark Award** in recognition of our commitment to providing high-quality PE, school sport and physical activity. This national award celebrates schools that offer a wide range of sporting opportunities, encourage participation for all pupils and promote healthy, active lifestyles. Well done and thank you Miss Croucher!

Attendance: Overall percentage for children's attendance across whole school is **94.3%**.

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	16
	Silver Certificates = 98% Attendance	27
	Bronze Certificates = 96% Attendance	19

Goodbyes:

As another successful school year draws to a close, we say a fond farewell to our wonderful Year 4 children. We are incredibly proud of all they have achieved during their time at Layston. They have been compassionate, thoughtful, resilient and enthusiastic members of our school community, embracing every opportunity with determination and kindness.

Over the years, they have made a lasting contribution to school life, whether through their learning, friendships, performances, or the care they have shown to others. As they prepare to begin the next stage of their educational journey at middle school, we know they will continue to flourish, embrace new challenges and make us all proud. We wish each and every one of them every success and happiness for the future.

We also say a heartfelt goodbye to three valued members of our staff team: Miss Croucher, Mrs Sullivan and Miss Kozub. Miss Croucher will be embarking on an exciting adventure as she begins her travels around Australia during the summer break. We thank her for her hard work, dedication and commitment to the children and families of Layston, and we look forward to hearing about her travels.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Mrs Sullivan and Miss Kozub for the care, professionalism and commitment they have shown throughout their time at Layston. Each of them has made a positive difference to the lives of our children and has played an important role in supporting our school community.

While we are sad to see them leave, we are incredibly grateful for everything they have contributed to Layston. They will be greatly missed by pupils, families and colleagues alike. We wish them every happiness and success in the future as they begin the next chapter of their journeys.

On behalf of the entire Layston community, thank you and good luck—we hope you will always remember that you will remain a valued part of the Layston family.

Reminder:

The new school term starts on Thursday 3rd 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

Reception have had a busy half term. We made cakes for our cake bake, using balance scales, using lots of mathematical language. They then enjoyed buying them after school. We have watched the life cycle of a caterpillar and observed how they changed over time and then let our butterflies go.



We had a visit from Garg's animal experience, where the children enjoyed learning about different animals and holding or stroking them. The Royal python was a big hit! Even the grown ups were brave!



The children were amazing in sports day and worked so hard at supporting each other in their races! Proper team work on show!

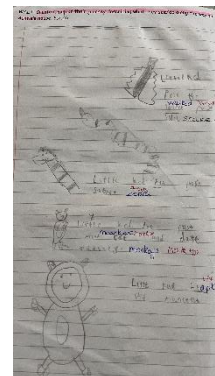
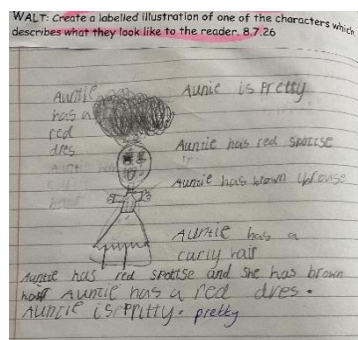
We were all so proud of them and how they supported each other!

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. They 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 Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion, creating booklets. Retelling their own version. As always, the children have enjoyed role-playing showing their fantastic acting skills!



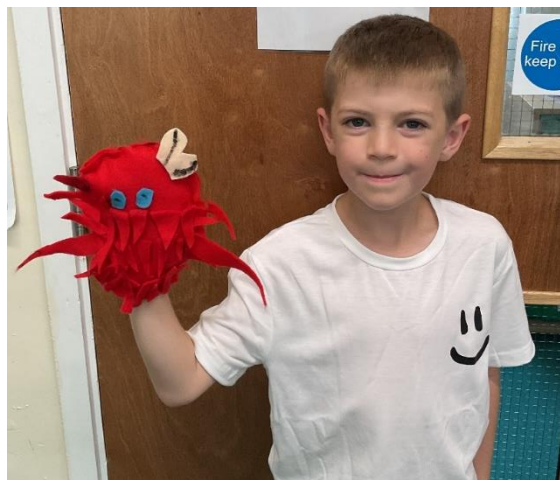
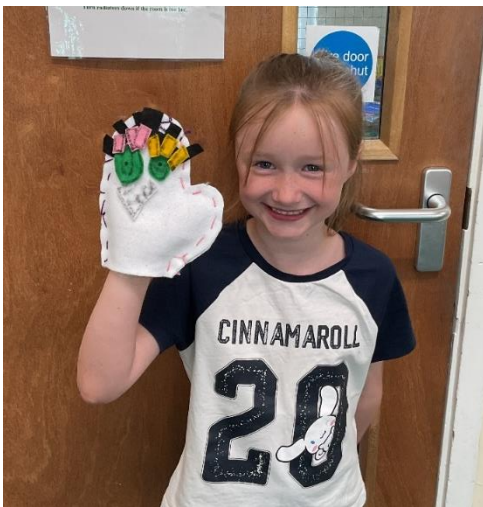
We finished off the term with our trip to Shepreth Zoo! Enjoyed by all. The children were all superstars representing Layston School. It has been a pleasure to see all the children blossom as individuals and have been a pleasure to teach. Wishing them every success when moving into year 2!



Year 2

What a busy term it has been in Year 2! In English, we have been working hard to join our handwriting, and writing our own lost and found stories. In Maths we have been learning to tell the time, and working on fractions. In science we've been exploring the conditions plants need to grow, and in History, we have been learning about the seaside 100 years ago. In R.E. we have been learning about Judaism, and we were lucky enough to have a visit from the lovely Rabbi Imrit who shared her work and life as a Jewish Rabbi. We have even designed and sewn our own hand puppets in D and T.

Take a look at some of our learning!



It has been a pleasure to teach Year 2 this year and it has been lovely to see the progress that the children have made. We hope you have a wonderful summer break and we look forward to seeing the children back in September! ☺

Year 3

Year 3 have had a fantastic and busy half term, with lots of exciting learning across the curriculum.

English

In English, we have been writing our own non-chronological reports about festivals. The children researched their chosen festival before using headings, subheadings and interesting facts to create informative reports. They worked hard to edit and improve their writing before producing their final pieces.

Maths

In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of fractions and shape. The children explored equivalent fractions, fractions of amounts and the properties of 2D and 3D shapes through a range of practical and problem-solving activities.

Design and Technology

In Design and Technology, we have been busy creating clay pots and designing our own decorative wraps. The children showed great creativity while developing their practical skills and were very proud of their finished work.



History

As part of our History learning, we enjoyed a walk around our local town, exploring its historic buildings and learning more about the history of our local area. It was a great opportunity to bring our classroom learning to life.



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. We are incredibly proud of everything the children have achieved this half term and wish everyone a happy and relaxing summer break!

Year 4



On Monday 8th June, Year 4 enjoyed our Ancient Egyptian day. Some of us dressed up, a few were mummified. We considered what we could learn from images, including the true and false parts shown. We learnt how to read and write with hieroglyphics, solving hidden messages and recording our names. The whole class loved learning about the embalming process, especially removing internal organs. We finished by learning about the Great Pyramids. We learnt about their structure, condense and investigated a mystery around them.



Year 4 loved their trip to Hudnall Park. It was great to see their confidence grow and they shone when taking part in team challenges. While there was lots of rain, nothing dampened their spirits. Rooms were tidy and the children showed impeccable manners throughout. They represented our school perfectly and will hopefully cherish the memories for years to come.



A few weeks ago we were able to turn our classroom into a pizzeria. After designing our own, the children learnt to make their own dough. They were impressed with how much they rose and then added their range of toppings. It was a smashing success and the classroom was filled with the smell of divine pizzas and the sounds of very happy children. I hope they continue to enjoy cooking at Edwinstree.

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to Year 4 for a fantastic year. Keep on being ready, respectful and responsible and I know your light will shine. Off you go.

PE, Eco Warriors and Outdoor Learning

Eco Warriors:

Although the Eco Warriors have not taken part in any specific projects this half term, they have continued to make a positive difference around the school. They have worked hard to help maintain school environment by encouraging everyone to keep our grounds tidy, reduce waste and recycle wherever possible. They have also been excellent advocates for environmentally friendly lifestyles, leading by example and reminding others of the small changes we can all make to care for our planet. We are proud of their commitment and enthusiasm in promoting sustainability throughout the school.



our
help

PE:

Physical Education continues to play an important role in school life, helping children to develop their physical skills, confidence and teamwork while encouraging healthy, active lifestyles. This term, pupils have enjoyed taking part in lessons following our PE scheme, developing a wide range of skills through fun, engaging and inclusive activities.

One of the highlights of the term was our whole-school Sports Day. It was wonderful to see every child taking part with enthusiasm, determination and excellent sportsmanship. The children encouraged one another throughout the day and demonstrated fantastic teamwork while enjoying a range of exciting events.



A group of eight Year 2 children proudly represented the school at an athletics competition held at St Edmund's College. They competed brilliantly, showing great determination, resilience and respect throughout the event.



Year 3 also enjoyed a visit to Royston Bowls Club, where they took part in a grass bowls session. The children learned new skills, practised their accuracy and enjoyed trying a sport that was new to many of them. They represented the school exceptionally well and had a wonderful experience working with the club's coaches.



Forest School

Some plants in the Forest and in the Layston allotment may be wilting from the heat, but certainly not the Layston pupils. They have been fabulously busy and wonderfully focused this half term, and I cannot believe how much they have achieved.

They have faced their fears on a wobbly strapline obstacle course, cooked and eaten rainbow toast around the log circle, created and played sustainable games, and explored the hidden world beneath the pond surface through careful dipping and creature identification. They've enjoyed cool water play with huge smiles and built impressive dens using their growing knowledge of knots, hitches, and tarpaulins.



Also, in addition to that, they have launched fairy boats, thinking about the density of different forest materials, built fairy dens, paying attention to proportions and aesthetics, made beautiful elder bead jewellery and played lots of brilliant games.



As the Year 4's leave Layston and their journeys continue to new places, we wish them all the best. King Tree waves you on, as do we.



Everyone at Layston, - may your nature adventures continue throughout the summer holiday, wherever you may be. Looking forward to seeing you again in September.

Governors

The full governing board ("FGB") has met once this term and looked at a number of topics. The school budget has been particularly challenging to set this year but we managed to balance the books by merging the Reception class and Year 1 for next year as previously notified. We have continued to make progress in a number of areas as part of our School Development Plan. We have been particularly pleased to see pupil progress and outcomes for reading and writing have shown significant improvement following the investment we have made in revamping the Read Write Inc phonics scheme.

As you know we welcomed Ofsted to the school at the end of June. Governors had a very productive meeting with the lead inspector and we are looking forward to being able to share their final report in due course. We know that there are still areas where we want to raise our game further, but it was pleasing to receive acknowledgement of the significant progress we have made in recent years.

The term has seen a number of changes amongst the Governors. Camilla d'Arecco, at the start of term, and Cat Morris, at the end of term, have had to step down as parent governors due to pressure of work. I would like to thank them both for their valuable contributions to the work of the Board, and especially Cat as Vice-Chair who has been a tremendous support to me. Katie Orger will join the staff in the school office in September and so will no longer be eligible to be a parent governor, but we very much hope she will rejoin as a staff governor.

As a consequence of the above there are now several vacancies for parent governors on the Board. We will be advertising these and seeking nominations in the autumn term, but do please consider if this is an area where you think you might be able to support the school. Please feel free to ask myself or any other governor if you have any questions.

On the staff side, we say goodbye to Miss Croucher. Governors would like to extend our thanks to her for everything she has done for the school and for the children and we wish her all the best in her travels and future plans.

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.

Colin Wilson,
Chair of Governors