

The Layston Newsletter





October 2026

Head's desk



Values:
Our new value for the first half of the autumn term is 'Community'. This Christian Value comes from a Greek word 'Koinonia' which means 'that which is in common'. In school, we have ensured that everyone feels included, children support one another, and everyone makes a contribution and knows that they are valued and important. We have also thought about how we can involve the wider community in our harvest fundraising by supporting the Buntingford Food Support. A huge thank you to everyone who donated food items at our Harvest Festival, every little thing we can do to look after our neighbour makes a difference.

Spirituality Learning



This half term, we have continued to nurture spirituality across our school, encouraging children to pause, reflect and think more deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and the things that are beyond us. Through collective worship, classroom learning and everyday moments, children have been encouraged to notice what inspires them, to ask big questions and to recognise the importance of kindness, compassion, gratitude and hope. We are proud of the thoughtful way our children are developing their ability to reflect and to consider how their words and actions can make a positive difference to others.

Enrichment

African Dance Workshop



One of the ways we have celebrated Black History Month has been to welcome a dance workshop into our school, funded by FOLS (thank you FOLS!). Celebrating diversity and inclusion is incredibly important to us at Layston and we are immensely grateful for the opportunity to learn from others.

Y4 Buddies and Play Leaders

Y4 children have stepped up and made excellent Buddies who have been ready to support anyone at break or lunch who needs a friend, a helping hand or some comfort. They are all a credit to you and are making a big difference settling our younger children into the school so that they feel safe and happy. They are extremely responsible and are relishing this opportunity. They have also received

training to become play leaders, supporting our younger children at lunchtimes with their play. Well done Y4 you are living out our value of community and developing spirituality.

Online Safety

Yesterday, Mr Harwood delivered an Online Safety session to all children. The session focused on helping pupils understand how to stay safe online, make positive choices when using technology, and know what to do if they encounter anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or concerned. Please see the information below for useful guidance and tips on how to keep children safe online. We encourage parents and carers to take time to discuss online safety at home and maintain open conversations about children's online activities.

Attendance

Our whole-school attendance for this half term is 95.5%, which is just 0.5% below our target of 96%. We would like to thank all families for their continued support in promoting good attendance and ensuring that children are in school every day and ready to learn.

Occasional Day

A reminder that Friday 4th December is an Occasional day and school will be closed.
Have a safe and restful half term break. Your children have worked hard this half term and we are immensely proud of them.

School Photos

Pret-a-Portrait have extended their discount on all school photos until the 12th November. If you have misplaced your sitting ID, please contact Pret-a-Portrait directly on 0800 021 7626 or customerservice@pret-a-portrait.net

Best wishes,
Mrs McMurrough



Hedgehogs Class

Hedgehogs have all settled well back into the routine of school. The Year 1 children are being fabulously supportive and helpful to our Hoglets.

Hoglets have been learning to use the different areas of the classroom and there is some lovely play going on.



They are all working very hard in their phonics and beginning their reading journey!

Hedgehogs have been working hard. In English we have been practicing using our Capital letters, finger spaces and full stops in our writing.

As part of our geography, we have been learning about maps and aerial views. We used Google Earth to explore the school grounds and we looked at our school playground and all went to make maps.

In DT and as part of our harvest celebrations we had a vote to decide what soup we would like to make and tomato came out as a clear winner.





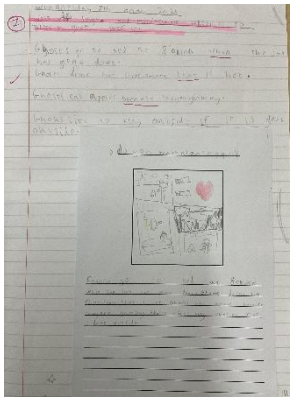
We explored different fruits and vegetables during our snack times and then did lots of chopping, thinking carefully about safety of using our knives. We then cooked our soup. During the afternoon we practiced buttering bread and cutting it up into quarters and then had a taste. There were definitely a mix of reviews but we were very impressed with the trying!

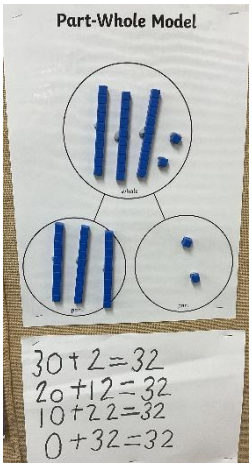
We are very excited for next half term!

Owl Class

What a great start to the Year we have had in Year 2!

In Maths, we have been working hard on understanding place value. In English, the children have really enjoyed reading our focus book 'How to Make Friends with a Ghost' by Rebecca Green. They have produced some lovely writing on looking after ghosts and making friends.

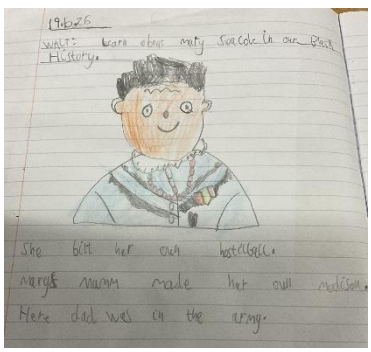




In Geography, we have been investigating whether we would prefer to live in a hot or cold place, learning about the continents. The children have produced some brilliant home learning around this and have enjoyed sharing it.



In Art, the children have been learning about tone and texture. Creating observational drawings, using different drawing materials. They also loved taking part in the African Dance workshop, learning about Mary Seacole for our Black History.

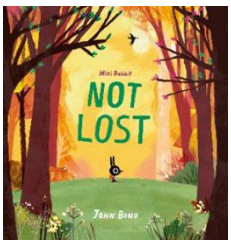




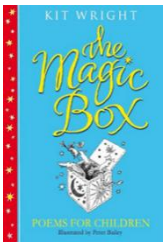


Hare Class

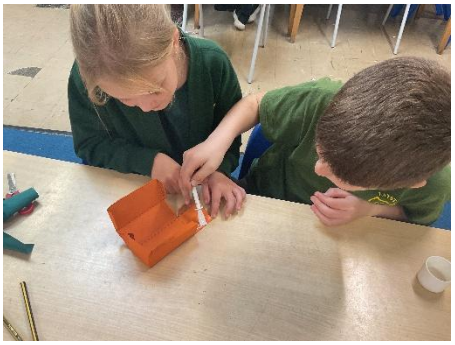
In Hare class we have had such a busy half term!



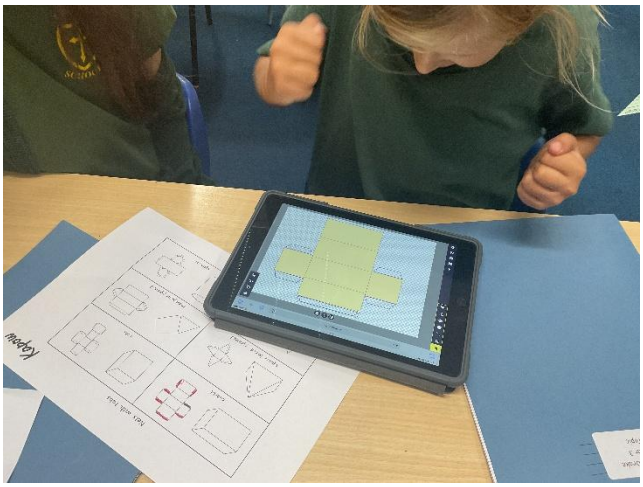
In English, we have been exploring the story of Mini Rabbit not lost and writing our own adventure stories. We have then written incredibly imaginative poems based on 'The Magic Box' by Kit Wright.



In Geography, we have been learning about Volcanoes and Earthquakes. The children have created some wonderful home learning about this! We have loved hearing about it and seeing the videos of their experiments!

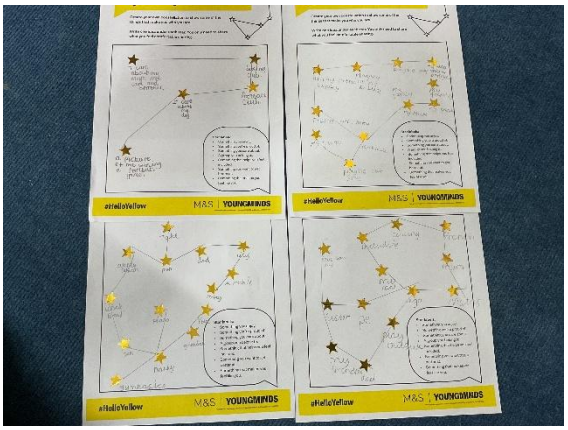


In D and T, we have been exploring product packaging and then designing our own using Computer Aided Design software. We've then made it, and strengthened it using ribbing. So much perseverance needed, and we've been very proud of them!



In Science we have been learning about humans and nutrition. We've even made our own working hands!

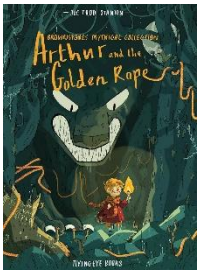




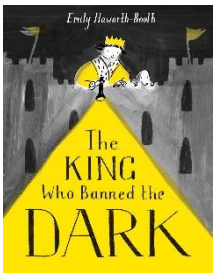
Finally, we enjoyed Hello Yellow day, and the children have created lovely identity constellations. We are all different and we all belong!

Falcon Class

Along with learning about the Anglo-Saxons, tales of dangerous quests and becoming experts with place value, Year 4 have also taken up the challenge of being superb role-models for the rest of the school.



In English, the class have explored Arthur and the Golden Rope to develop their narrative writing. We created detailed graphic novels before learning how to accurately punctuate and include direct speech in our story writing. Not only that, but we have used similes and metaphors in our animal poems and have become experts on persuasion with The King Who Banned the Dark.



In maths, Year 4 have investigated different ways to represent integers up to 10,000 along with rounding and Roman numerals. More recently, they have taken up the challenge to use the inverse operation to check their addition and subtraction calculations.



Our science topic of health and digestion has led us to consider how different teeth help us digest food. They have become experts at examining diets, even investigate faeces for clues of where they came from. The class have loved having the support of 'Dave' the plastic human and 'Bob' the skull.



The class loved our Anglo-Saxon day, where we were lucky enough to try on armour, handle artefacts and even have a go at some archery. We learnt about the history of the Anglo-Saxons, and were able to be transported back in time thanks to our visitor. The children looked great in their outfits too.

Falcon class were outstanding in our recent auditions for our production of Pirates of the Curry Bean and they are excited to learn their lines over half term. We cannot wait to get rehearsing and share with the school before Christmas.

