Ashdon Primary School

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Challenge · Care · Celebrate

Newsletter

16th October 2026



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Thank You for Your Harvest Gifts

A huge thank you to all our families for being so incredibly generous with your harvest gifts. Our harvest table was piled high with tins, pasta, cereal and so much more. Your kindness will make a real difference to people in our local community, and it is a wonderful reminder of what a caring school community we are.

This morning we came together for our Harvest Festival Assembly, and the children performed so many wonderful songs, including *Harvest Samba*, *Combine Harvester*, *Paint Box* and *Autumn Days*, to name but a few! They sang beautifully and read their harvest words with real confidence.

Thank you to Mrs Clark and all our teachers for preparing the children so well. It was a joyful celebration of the harvest and of being thankful for all that we have.







KS2 CROSS COUNTRY

Ready, Steady, Run!

On Tuesday afternoon, our Key Stage 2 runners travelled to Herbert's Farm in Saffron Walden to take part in the cross-country event, racing alongside children from other schools across the Uttlesford area.

Cross country is no easy challenge! The children tackled grass, hills and muddy patches, and every single one of them kept going right to the finish line. They showed real determination and resilience, cheered on their teammates and represented Ashdon brilliantly. Taking part in events like this builds stamina, confidence and teamwork, and gives children the chance to compete and make friends with pupils from other schools.

We are so proud of all our runners. Well done, everyone!

Special congratulations to **Lyla**, who came **3rd** in her race and won a medal, and to **Harry**, who came **10th** in his. Fantastic running!



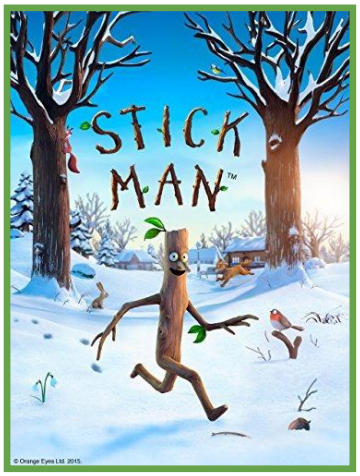




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MARS CLASS · RECEPTION AND YEAR 1

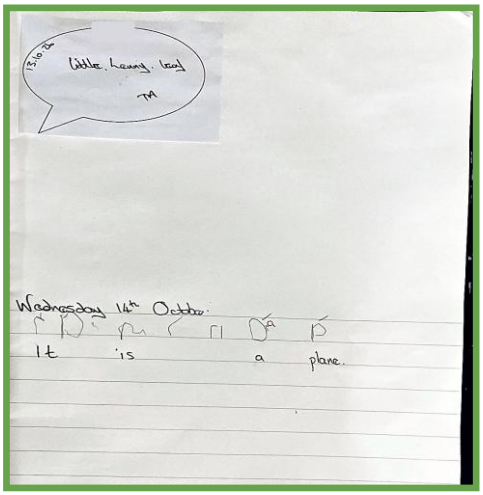
What Could a Stick Be?

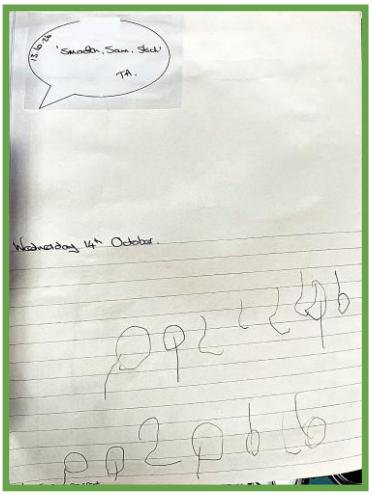


This week Mars Class have been reading ***Stick Man*** by Julia Donaldson. On his long journey home, Stick Man is mistaken for all sorts of things, from a bat for a game of fetch to a Poohstick in a river! The children loved the story and used it to think about all the different things a stick could be.

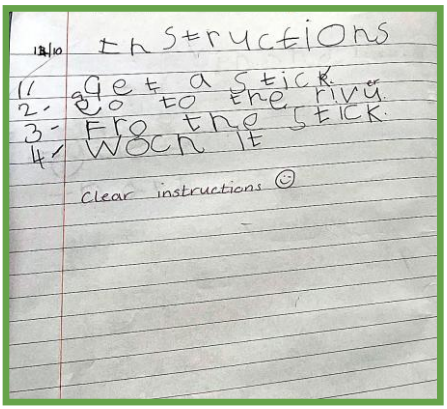
Our **Reception** children explored real sticks, thought of words to describe them, such as "little, lanky, long", and then used their phonics to write what their stick could be: "It is a plane" and "It is a carrot"! Our **Year 1** children wrote clear, numbered instructions for playing Poohsticks, starting each step with a bossy verb: get, go, throw and watch. Fantastic writing, Mars Class!

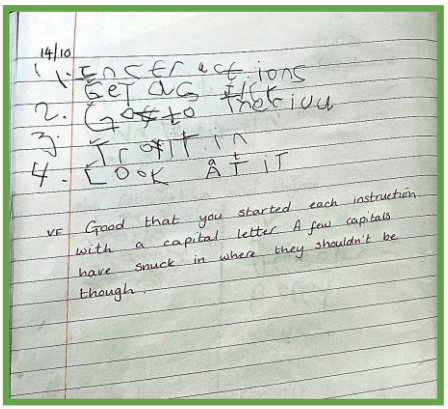
RECEPTION · Describing a stick and saying what it could be

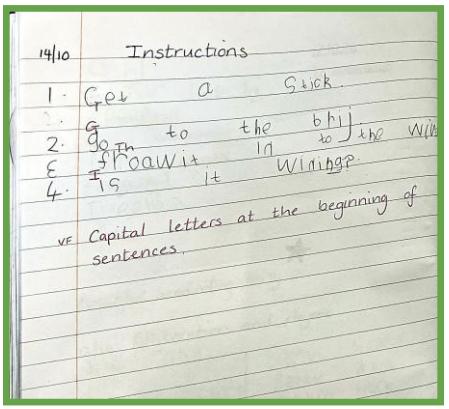




YEAR 1 · Instructions for playing Poohsticks









You're never too old for Poohsticks!

Here are Mrs Reynecke-Raybould and her husband in Wales, taking part in a Poohsticks competition (very serious business!). If she had followed the instructions written by our Year 1 children in Mars Class, she might well have won the race!

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SATURN CLASS · YEARS 2 AND 3

Adding and Subtracting

Saturn Class have been working incredibly hard on addition and subtraction this week, and we are so proud of them!

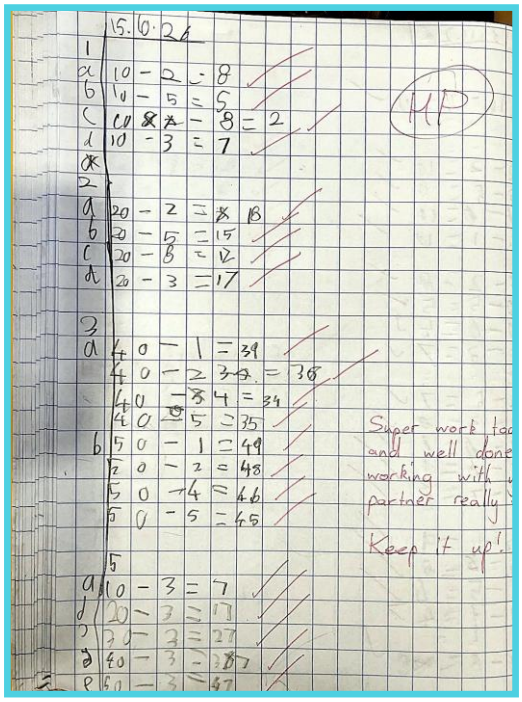
In **Year 2**, children learn to recall and use number facts to 10 and 20, and use them to work out related facts with bigger numbers. Our Year 2s spotted the pattern brilliantly: if 10 − 2 = 8, then 20 − 2 = 18, 40 − 2 = 38 and 50 − 2 = 48. Using what they already know to solve harder calculations is a really important step.

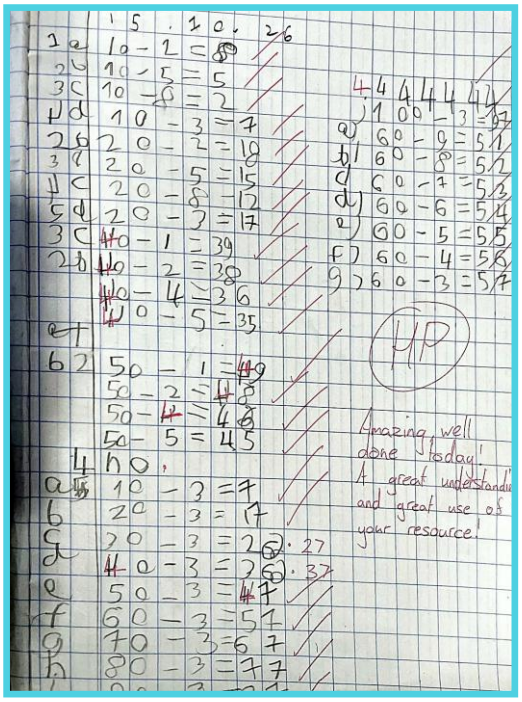
In **Year 3**, children build on this by adding and subtracting numbers with up to three digits, using the formal written method of column addition. Our Year 3s lined up their hundreds, tens and ones carefully to solve calculations such as 405 + 361 and 787 + 101. Understanding place value is the key that links the two: knowing what each digit is worth helps children move confidently from mental number facts to written methods.

YEAR 2

Number facts and patterns

Using facts to 10 and 20 to subtract from bigger numbers.

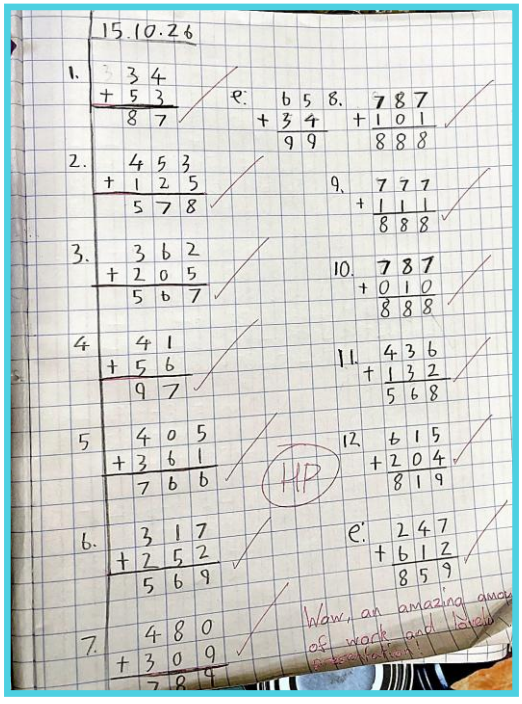


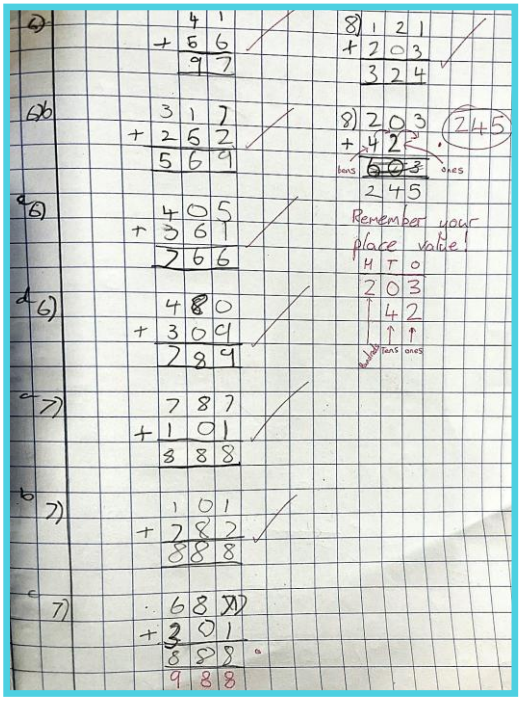


YEAR 3

Column addition

Adding three-digit numbers with hundreds, tens and ones.





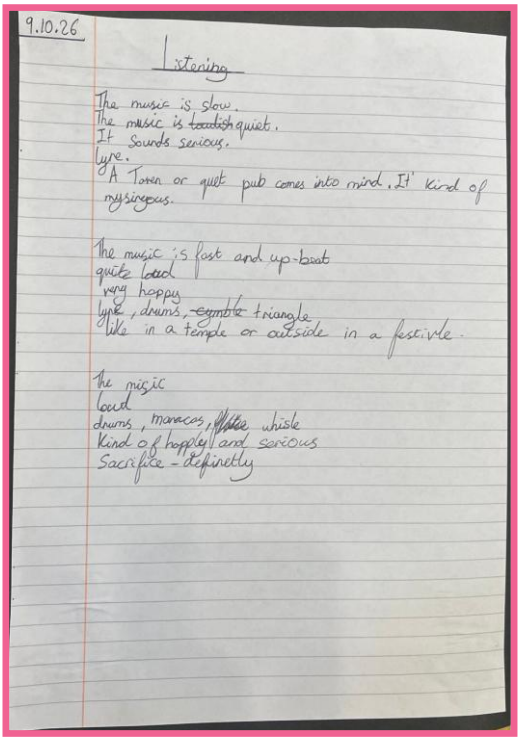
JUPITER CLASS · MUSIC

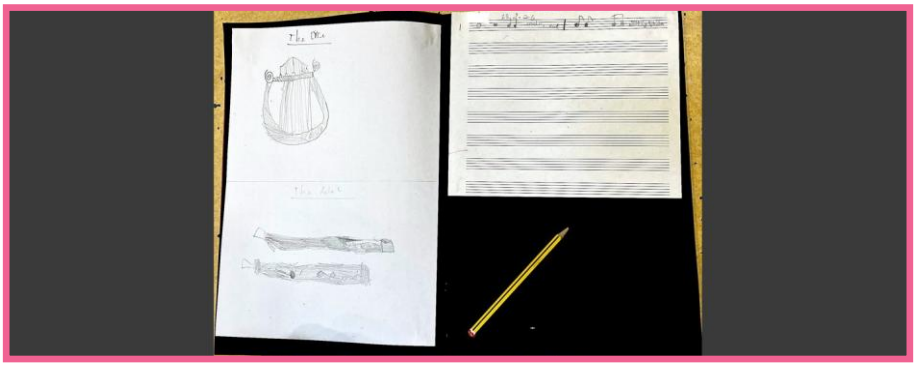
Making Music with Mrs Clark

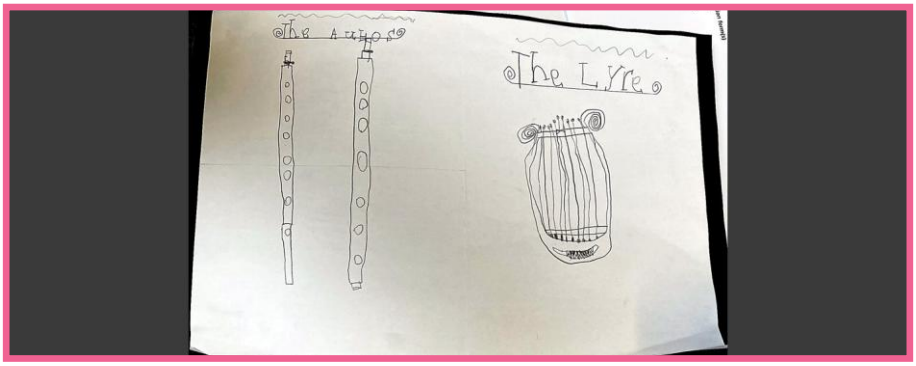
Jupiter Class have been learning to read and write rhythms with Mrs Clark. They have been finding out about different note values, from the crotchet (one beat) to a pair of quavers (half a beat each), as well as minims, semibreves and rests, and have been writing their own rhythms on the stave.

Linking with their Ancient Greece topic, the children also drew two instruments the ancient Greeks played: the **lyre**, a small stringed instrument, and the **aulos**, a double pipe. They then listened carefully to pieces of music, describing the tempo, volume and mood and imagining where they might be heard: “like in a temple or outside in a festival”!









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JUPITER CLASS · SCIENCE

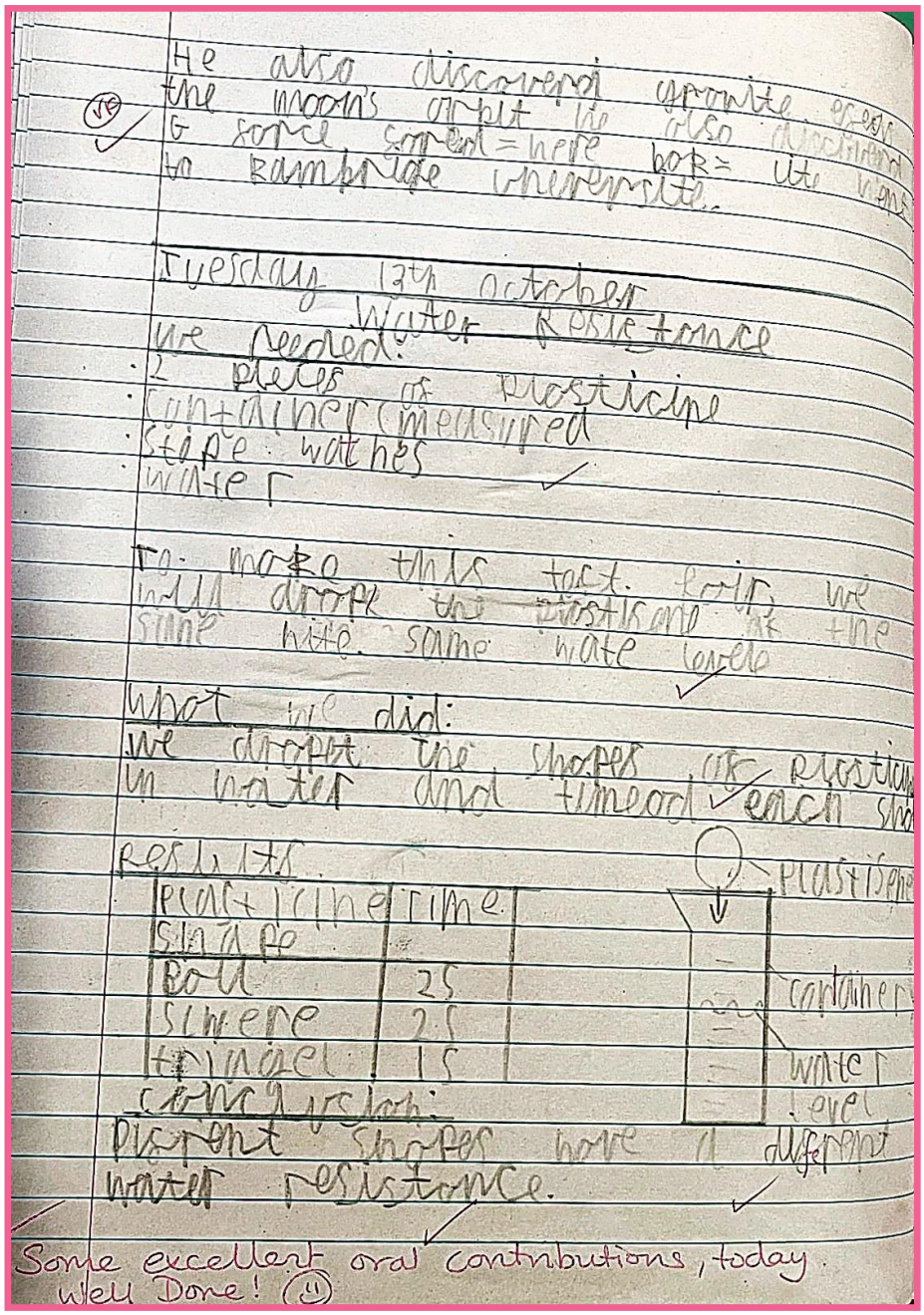
Making a Splash with Forces



Jupiter Class have been learning about forces, and this week they investigated **water resistance**. Water resistance is a force that pushes against an object as it moves through water, slowing it down. The children wanted to find out whether the shape of an object changes how much water resistance it meets.

Working as real scientists, they moulded plasticine into different shapes, including a ball, a sphere and a triangle, and dropped each one into a tall container of water, timing how long it took to sink with stopwatches. To make it a fair test, they kept everything the same except the shape: the same amount of plasticine, the same drop height and the same water level. They recorded their results in a table and drew labelled diagrams of their equipment.

Their conclusion: different shapes have different water resistance! Wide, flatter shapes met the most resistance and sank slowly, while pointed, streamlined shapes cut through the water fastest. This is exactly why fish, dolphins, boats and submarines are streamlined. Brilliant scientific thinking, Jupiter!



One group's results

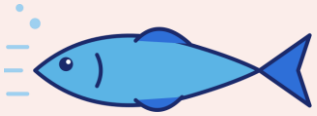
Shape	Time to sink
Ball	2 seconds
Sphere	2 seconds
Triangle	1 second

KEY WORDS

force · water resistance · streamlined · fair test

Try it at home!

Fill a tall, clear jug with water. Roll some play dough into a ball, flatten a piece into a pancake and shape another into a point. Drop each one in and time how long it takes to reach the bottom. Which is fastest? Why do you think fish and boats are the shape they are?



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GOVERNORS

News from our Governors

Our governors visit regularly to see school life first-hand, talk to the children and help us keep improving. Here is what they have been up to.

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER · MRS RETIEF

Ethos, Culture and Behaviour Learning Walk

Mrs Retief, our Vice-Chair of Governors, joined Mrs Reynecke-Raybould on a learning walk to see how our values of Care, Challenge and Celebrate, and our Golden Rules, show up in everyday school life. She found the atmosphere across the school calm, positive and purposeful.

She described the start-of-day playground as "particularly joyful", with children playing happily together and following the whistle routine to line up calmly. In our Celebration Assembly, children entered calmly, greeted visitors, listened to one another and celebrated each other's work. She also saw lovely moments of kindness, including an older pupil helping two Reception children who were unsure where to go.

The children told her their learning is "just right": they can ask for more of a challenge if work is too easy, and their teachers help them work answers out rather than simply giving them. Mrs Retief summed it up as **"a beautiful picture of ethos, culture and behaviour at Ashdon Primary".**

THIS WEEK · MRS HARTLEY

English

Mrs Hartley, our Chair of Governors, came in to look at English across the school. She joined Mrs Reynecke-Raybould on a learning walk, then spoke to a group of children who were very eager to tell her about their English work.

They talked about everything from creating lists to discussing rhyme and stanzas in depth, and shared their favourite poetry with her!

THIS WEEK · MRS RETIEF

Science

Mrs Retief also visited to look at science, alongside our Science Lead, Mrs Reynolds. Together they saw how science is taught across the school and talked with children about their learning.

During the visit, Mrs Reynecke-Raybould was teaching Mars Class about carnivores, herbivores and omnivores: sorting animals by what they eat.

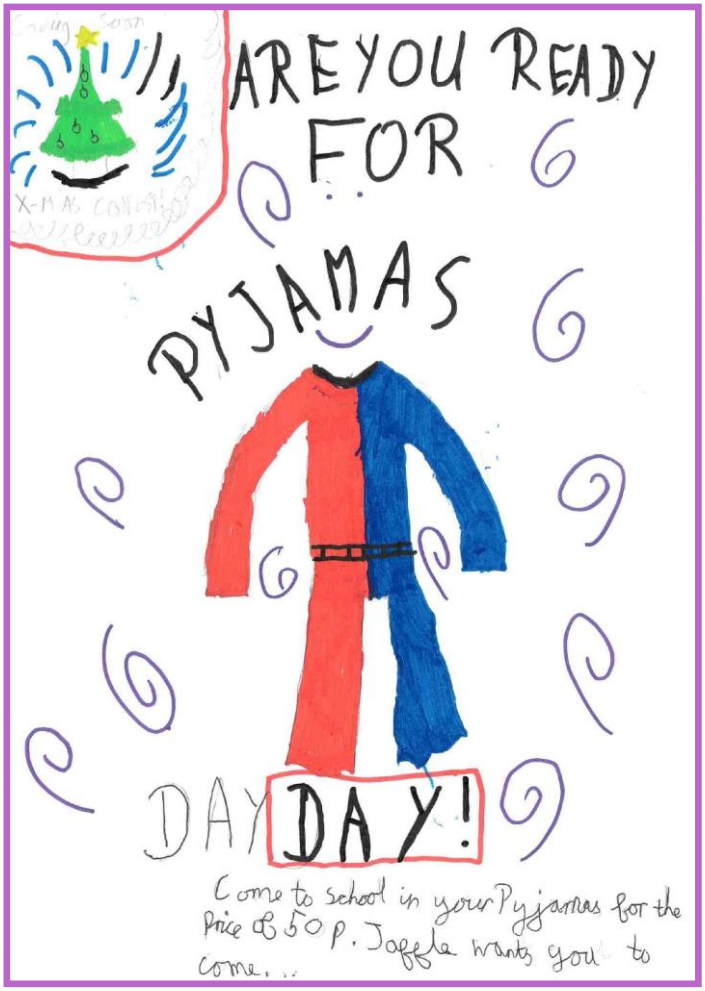
COMING UP NEXT WEEK

Wednesday 21 October Mrs Hartley will visit to look at phonics teaching across the school, alongside Mrs Reynecke-Raybould.

Thursday 22 October Mr Wiles will visit to look at maths teaching in all classes, including Mrs Reynecke-Raybould teaching our Year 6 children.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

News from the School Council



PYJAMA DAY

Friday 23 October

Everyone is invited to come to school in their **pyjamas** (or non-uniform) and bring **50p**.

The money will buy felt-tip pens for every class, which the children will use to make decorations for our **house Christmas tree decoration competition** between Elm, Oak and Ash!

Coming soon: the House Christmas Tree Decoration Competition!

Look out for more details soon!



A message from your School Council, exactly as they wrote it

ASHDON SCHOOL COUNCIL.

ON FRIDAY 23RD OCTOBER

We have decided to fundraise to buy each class felt tipped-pens for wet play times.

Come to school in your pyjamas or non-uniform (feel free to be included).

It will cost you 50p, PLEASE!!!!!

THANK YOU!!!!!!

FROM: School Council

House Points

Elm	Oak (WINNERS)	Ash
105	108	106

Well done to Oak, this week's winners!

★ Stars of the Week ★

Our three values — Challenge, Care and Celebrate — sit behind everything we do, alongside our Golden Rules: Ready, Respectful, Responsible, Resilient. This week's Stars of the Week have shown exactly that, and were celebrated in Friday's assembly. Well done to all of you — we are very proud. Do use this language at home too; hearing it in both places is what really makes it stick.



Pawsome Reader of the Week



Well done to our Pawsome Reader this week! I am so proud of your reading. Keep going!

Lots of love from Jaffle



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Attendance Winners!

Every Day Counts!

At Ashdon Primary, we know that being in school every day makes a real difference. Good attendance helps children keep up with their learning, build strong friendships and feel happy and settled in class. Missed days add up quickly: a child with 90% attendance misses around half a day every week, which is almost four weeks of school across the year.

As a school, we always aim for whole-school attendance of 97% and above, and we can only achieve this with your support.

To celebrate great attendance, the class with the highest attendance each week wins an extra 10 minutes of playtime on Friday! The winners are announced in our Friday Celebration Assembly and shared in the newsletter.

Thank you for helping your child to be in school, on time, every day.

WINNERS
Saturn Class — **99.00%**

RUNNERS-UP
Mars Class — **97.60%**

THIRD PLACE
Jupiter Class — **94.80%**

OUR TARGET
97% and above

Important Dates, Events and Reminders

All of October	Black History Month. Saturn and Jupiter will be set a half-term history project to share at the first Celebration Assembly after half term.
Every Thursday	Piano lessons for KS2 children (in the hall)
Tue 20 & Wed 21 Oct	Parent Consultations, 15:40–18:00
Fri 23 Oct	Non-uniform or pyjamas day. Last day of Autumn Term 1
Mon 2 Nov	First day of Autumn Term 2
Mon 2 – Wed 11 Nov	Poppy Appeal
Fri 6 Nov	Bikeability (selected children only; an email will follow)
Wed 11 Nov, 11:00	Two-minute silence at the war memorial for Remembrance. All parents are welcome to join us.
Wed 11 Nov, 18:00–19:00	Open Evening for prospective parents. Please spread the word!
Mon 30 Nov – Fri 4 Dec	Assessment Week
Wed 2 Dec, 09:30–14:30	Bikeability (selected children only)
Fri 4 Dec	Christmas Jumper Day
Fri 11 Dec	10:00 Carol Service at All Saints Church · 15:00–17:00 Christmas Fair
Fri 18 Dec	Nativity performances at 10:00 and 14:00 · Last day of Autumn Term 2

Parking: please read

Please do not park in front of the cottages when dropping off or collecting your child. We have received numerous complaints from our neighbours, so please park considerately and respect residents' homes and driveways. Thank you.

Arbor

Please check your Arbor account regularly for updates and notifications, and turn on push notifications in the app so you never miss a message.

Through the Arbor app or website you can now:

- Pay for trips and clubs — all payment information is on Arbor
- Pay for school lunches
- View your child's attendance record at any time