NEWSLETTER

October 2026

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome to the October Newsletter. What a busy start to the new school year! The academic year started with our 'new year group' parent meetings. Thank you to all who attended. I hope you found the information useful. We know that your children make the most progress when both parents and school work together.

Please take time to read this newsletter as it will give you **a flavour of what your child has been learning about since their return in September and what they will be learning about after half term**. This will allow you to discuss your child's learning with them. It will also tell you which class text your child will be reading in case they want to read other similar texts at home. In addition, it will share wider school approaches and upcoming events.

Attendance and punctuality matters

Firstly, a big thank-you to parents who are supporting school with attendance. Children only keep up with learning when they are here. Every second of learning time counts and missed learning, missed time with their friends, losing routines impacts on children's social and emotional well-being.

Please ensure your children are here on time so that they do not need to come in the main reception. Again it is not helpful to your child or a positive start to the school day to enter school this way. If you are regularly bringing children to main entrance, you will be contacted directly to ensure that does not continue. Again thank-you to parents who have responded to this request – we can already see the positive impact it is having on your children.

Regular attendance is essential for children to make the most of their education and achieve their full potential. Each day at school is packed with learning, social development, and activities that help build important life skills. When children miss school, they can fall behind and find it harder to catch up. School has an attendance policy in place and you may receive a letter about attendance. Escalation through the policy and series of letters can be minimised if parents communicate with school, giving reasons for absence and where possible, provide medical evidence for illness or appointments.

We'd like to remind parents that holidays taken during term time will generally be marked as *unauthorised*, and if a child misses 5 days (10 sessions) or more, this could result in a fine. We appreciate your support in helping your child attend school every day, on time.

Following our parent consultation in the summer term, we have introduced **smaller, more frequent ASDA voucher rewards**, and we are delighted with how positively the children have responded to these changes. Thank you for continuing to support us in making every school day count!

Let's all work together to continue to improve attendance. Please remember if there is something we can do to help you with your child's





attendance you can contact Mrs Hewes our parent liaison officer who will be happy to support.

Opal

We are absolutely delighted to share the fantastic news that Horton Grange has once again achieved the OPAL Play GOLD Award! This is a wonderful achievement and recognises the fantastic play opportunities our children enjoy every day. It was lovely to receive such positive feedback through our parent survey, and we are incredibly proud of the way our children represented our school throughout the assessment process. We truly are lucky to have such amazing playtimes! A huge thank you to our dedicated staff for all their hard work and commitment, and to our wonderful parents and carers for your generous donations and offers of help. Your support makes such a difference in helping us provide exciting, creative and engaging play experiences for every child



Wider Development

At Horton Grange we pride ourselves on not only ensuring our children achieve academically but also personally. We have a clear structured programme of residentials, visits and opportunities to develop the children's wider development. Already this year our visits have included:

Year 4: Northumberland Zoo
Year 5: Clip 'n' climb bowling

All of these visits and opportunities help children develop their resilience, communication and teamwork skills, the foundations of our Horton Values. We can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings. Well-done Team Horton.

School council

Our newly elected School Council members have made a fantastic start! Each representative was voted for by their classmates and has already begun taking an active role in representing pupil voice across our school. One of their first tasks was to present two options for our ASDA attendance rewards to their classes and gather feedback. By collecting and sharing this information, our School Council helped us make an informed decision about our new reward system. We are incredibly proud of our young representatives and look forward to seeing what they achieve this year!

Horton Rules

As many of you will know, we have introduced our simplified **Horton Rules: Ready, Respectful, Safe and Kind**. These four simple words help guide children's choices and behaviour throughout the school day. We have been so proud of the children and have seen lots of ePraise merits awarded for following our Horton Rules and demonstrating these values in action.



House System

Our new house system is also in full swing, with the winning houses announced each week! We are looking forward to our first **house-colour non-uniform day** and a special **OPAL playtime for the winning house** at the end of this half term. We can't wait to celebrate our teamwork, kindness and house spirit!



Clubs

We have had a fantastic start to the year with our extra-curricular club offer. The variety of clubs offered has been great and the children have had opportunities to develop their skills and interests in areas such as engineering, art and music.

If you would like your child to attend a club in Autumn term 2, then please respond to the message that is sent out or pop into the office. The following is available and will begin in week 2:

Reception

Christmas Craft Club – Tuesday lunch time

KS1

Christmas Craft Club – Monday 3.15-4.15pm
Christmas Drawing and Colouring Club – Monday 3.15-4.15pm
Christmas Movie Club - Monday 3.15-4.15pm

KS2

Christmas Drawing Club – Tuesday 3.20-4.20pm
Christmas Choir Club – Monday 3.20-4.20pm
Calligraphy Club – Monday 3.20-4.20pm
Gymnastics Club - Monday 3.20-4.20pm
Year 5/6 Football Club – Tuesday 3.20 – 4.20pm
Opal Club – Tuesday 3.20 – 4.20pm

Celebrating learning from Autumn 1 and what your child will be learning about in Autumn 2

Two Year Olds



The children have had a great start to the term. Staff welcomed the new starters, who have all settled well into Two-Year-Olds. There has been lots of child-initiated play to encourage the new starters to explore the environment independently, choosing the resources they need for their play. The children have had opportunities to join others in their play in the small world area where they have extended their play with peers. The 2YOs accessed dressing up clothes where they could take on a role and act out with others. This also promoted independence when attempting to put on and take off their own shoes, jumpers etc. They have enjoyed cooking, practicing controlling and using utensils and encouraging making choices based on their preferences.

There have been a few changes made to the outdoor area, which the children have enjoyed exploring. They have practised riding push-a-long trikes and using their bodies in different ways on the obstacle course and in the tunnel.



Thank you for your support in raising funds following the Sponsored Toddle, the children enjoyed their walk and used it as an excuse to collect natural resources too!

Staff have re-introduced the lending library this half term. It has been lovely hearing the feedback from parents about their children enjoying these books at home.

Tapestry is being used to share your child's experiences at nursery. If you have anything to share, staff would love to hear about what your children have been doing at home.

The following 10 texts are used continuously in 2YO. They inform a lot of the planning with links across the whole EYFS, and most importantly, repeating these texts impacts hugely on language development.
Pip and Posy series (6 titles) - Axel Scheffler
The Tiger Who Came to Tea - Judith Kerr
Whatever Next - Jill Murphy
Peace at Last - Jill Murphy
The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle

Next half term there will be more adult led activities. This is to encourage the children to settle at an activity for longer and also to promote their listening skills whilst following simple instructions. There will be sensory activities for the children to explore. This will be an opportunity for the children to engage in new experiences and be willing to have a go. They will be encouraged to use all of their senses and introduced to language of texture.
There will be lots of opportunities for mark making too, both on a small and large skill to develop both fine motor and gross motor movements. The lending library will continue each week and there will be a book to choose and keep for each child after every five posts on Tapestry to show them enjoying sharing their lending library books at home. It would also be great to see what your children are enjoying doing at home when they are not in two-year olds. Any photos of the children can be shared on Tapestry and we can talk about this with your children.

Could you please ensure that your child has adequate supplies for their intimate care needs and spare clothing each day in case they need to be changed for any reason.

As the weather is getting colder, could you please make sure your child has suitable warm outdoor clothing as we still access outdoors in all weathers.

Nursery

What a fantastic first half term it has been in Nursery! The children have settled in brilliantly and are quickly becoming familiar with the rules and routines of their new environment. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they explore, learn and develop new skills together.

The topic, **All About Me**, has inspired lots of exciting learning. The children have been naming different parts of the body, including shoulders, knees and elbows, and exploring the many different families that make each of them special. They have also enjoyed creating their own self-portraits, carefully drawing and painting key facial features such as eyes, noses and mouths. What wonderful little artists they are becoming!

Storytime has been full of fun, laughter and imagination as the children have explored three of Nursery's five core stories. First came *The Gruffalo*, which proved a huge hit! The children quickly became fantastic storytellers themselves, retelling the story with growing confidence and enthusiasm. Next, they enjoyed *The Last Noo-Noo*, which provided an opportunity to talk about dummies and how they can affect children's teeth and speech. Most recently, *Oi Frog!* had everyone giggling as they thought of different things each animal could sit on, listening carefully for rhyming words along the way.

Alongside all this exciting learning, the children have been busy developing their listening and attention skills through a variety of fun activities. They are becoming brilliant at remembering our listening rules and are beginning to show fantastic focus during adult-led group times. What a super achievement!





It has also been lovely to see so many children growing in independence. Many are already putting on their own coats and shoes, showing just how much confidence they are gaining each day.

Well done, Nursery! The children have made a wonderful start, and there is so much more fun, learning and discovery to look forward to next half term!

Get ready for a bear-y exciting half term in Nursery next half term! The new topic is **Bears**, and the children will be embarking on lots of wonderful adventures through stories, songs and hands-on exploration.

Storytime will continue to play a big part in our learning as we explore the next two of our five core texts: *Whatever Next!* and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* The children will have opportunities to develop their listening, speaking and imagination skills as they become familiar with these much-loved stories.

Nursery will also be going on an exciting adventure with '*We're Going on a Bear Hunt*!' Along the way, the children will explore their **five senses** by investigating different sounds, smells, sights and textures. From listening carefully to the sounds around them to getting hands-on with different materials, there will be plenty of opportunities to discover, explore and learn through play.

As the excitement of Christmas begins to build, Nursery will be filled with festive fun! The children can look forward to lots of special events, including a pantomime right here in school. What a wonderful way to bring some Christmas magic into our learning!

With bears to discover, stories to enjoy and festive surprises just around the corner, there is so much to look forward to. **We can't wait for another fantastic half term in Nursery!**

Reception

Reception children made a fantastic start to their school journey and settled into school life brilliantly! They quickly became familiar with their morning routine, confidently completing their self-registration and voting for the book they wanted to enjoy. The children loved exploring stories by wonderful authors such as David Melling and Julia Donaldson, bringing the characters and adventures to life through their enthusiasm for reading.

In Phonics, the children worked hard to learn their Set 1 sounds and were incredibly excited to take their sound cards home to practise with their families. They made amazing progress and showed great enthusiasm for developing their early reading skills.

Maths was full of discovery as the children explored patterns. They enjoyed spotting repeating patterns all around them and soon became confident at creating their own.



The children also got creative with some fantastic self-portrait work. They carefully painted their own portraits and used salt dough to mould and create their faces. These wonderful creations were proudly displayed in the classrooms.



As part of their learning about 'Our Place in the World' the children discovered more about where they lived and explored familiar places in Blyth. They impressed everyone with their knowledge and were able to talk about places in their local area.

It was also lovely to welcome parents and carers into school for the Phonics Workshops and our Biscuits and a Book sessions. The children thoroughly enjoyed sharing their learning, showing off their new skills and celebrating their achievements with their families.



What a wonderful start to Reception! The children made fantastic progress, showed growing independence and embraced every opportunity to learn, explore and create.

Reception children have an exciting half term ahead, filled with celebrations, creativity and plenty of new learning! They will explore a range of special occasions, including birthdays, Diwali and, of course, Christmas. The children will discover how different celebrations are enjoyed and learn about the traditions, customs and festivities that make each one special.

There will also be plenty of excitement as the children prepare for their Christmas performance! They will be busy practising their songs, learning their parts and getting ready to share a very special festive performance with their families.

In Phonics, the children will take the next step in their reading journey by learning to blend sounds together to read green words.

In maths, the children will begin exploring the composition of numbers, discovering how numbers can be made up of smaller parts. Through practical activities, games and hands-on exploration, they will develop their understanding of numbers in fun and meaningful ways.

The class text will be Little Glow by Katie Sahota. This book focuses on many celebrations that people around the world take part in.

Hub



What a great half term the children in the hub have had. They got used to our learning space and new routines each day. The children loved playing outside in the Autumn sunshine and feeling the breeze in our hair. In PE sessions the children explored equipment, travelling along different pathways. They have enjoyed stories and exploring sensory boxes to match key moments from the text. During Little Red Riding Hood, the children made puppets, created collage using different red materials, used red paint to explore hand printing, and large mark making using decorating brushes.

Through The Little Red Hen story children explored growing something from a seed – we chose cress. Squashing and squeezing salt dough to make hen magnets was great fun. Then the children used our squashing and pushing skills to knead bread, just like Little Red Hen.







Year 1



The Year 1 children have had a super start to the year. They are settling into their new routines and have begun to build relationships with the Key Stage 1 staff. In maths, the children have been learning all about the place value of numbers to 10. They have been ordering numbers, finding one more and less, comparing numbers, calculating within 10 and problem solving. The children have enjoyed using concrete resources to support their learning. Each day begins with a Mastering Number session and all children are now able to access NUMBOTS in school and at home. This app helps to build fluency in maths.

In English, the children have enjoyed listening to the traditional tale The Gingerbread Man. They also enjoyed listening to a text by our favourite author, Julia Donaldson. The children loved What the Ladybird Heard and they wrote some super sentences about characters and plot. They have explored non-fiction texts, looking at titles, bullet point lists and captions. The children loved writing their own animal fact files.

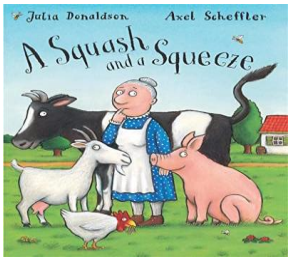
In Art, the children have studied famous artist, Julian Opie and have created their own art in his famous pop art style. Their artwork was amazing! Throughout, they developed their understanding of primary and secondary colours and developed their skills in sketching, brush tools and using oil pastels. In geography, the children have been learning about their local area and locating their town and nearest city on a map.

The Year 1 children love science! They have learned some fascinating facts about animals. They have investigated different animal classifications and can identify birds, mammals and fish. They have also explored the outdoor area and talked about the changes that happen outdoors during autumn. In history, the children have learned all about the famous heroine of the past, Grace Darling. They found out about her early life and how she rescued people from the sea off the coast of Northumberland. The children were fascinated by her bravery, going out to sea in such a terrible storm and were amazing at retelling the story using our class story map. To enhance learning further, next half term, the children will visit St Mary's Lighthouse in Whitley Bay to see inside a real lighthouse, similar to the one that Grace Darling lived in!



In music, Year 1 have been learning how to find and keep a steady pulse, follow and copy different rhythms, and explore different types of voices, including thinking, speaking and singing voices. The children particularly enjoyed playing the glockenspiels, having a go at copying the rhythm of a song. They have shown great enthusiasm and confidence as they develop their musical skills!

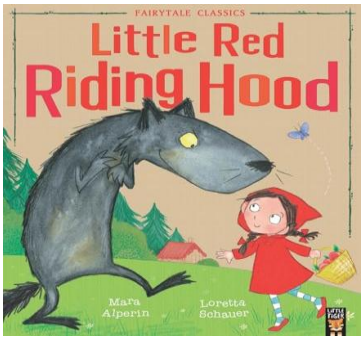
Next half term in maths, children will continue to develop their understanding of number and the number system. They will build confidence adding and subtracting within 10 to help them to solve word problems. They will learn all about 2D and 3D shapes and their properties.

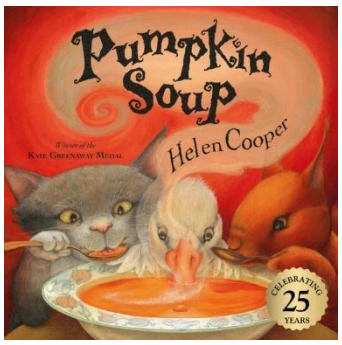


In English, Year 1 will be reading more texts by Julia Donaldson, for example A Squash and a Squeeze. They will also be reading and writing poetry. In science, the children will identify, name and describe materials. They will also compare and group materials on their physical properties. The children will become scientists when investigating the best material to make an umbrella and will be designing and making a boat in DT. The children will be testing our boats to see if they float or sink. During the holidays can you please collect any empty boxes or plastic bottles for our model making. Please could bottles be rinsed out first. Year 1 homework continues to be weekly reading and NUMBOTS. Children should read at home four times weekly and they will be rewarded with a custard cream on Friday. Book bags should be in school every day. Thank you for your support with this. We encourage children to use NUMBOTS at home 3 x weekly for sessions of 15 minutes.

<u>Year 2</u>

What a super start to the year in Year 2. The children have been working hard on their basic skills like letter and number formation and writing simple sentences. In English, the children have read Little Red Riding Hood and Pumpkin Soup. They have written some fantastic sentences to describe the main characters and different settings. They have enjoyed using adjectives and nouns and even wrote their own autumn rhyming poem.







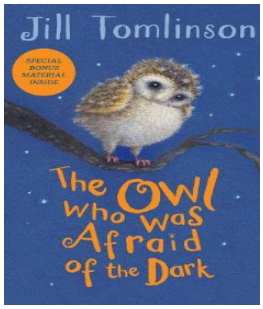
In maths, children have continued to count in 2's, 5's and 10's, in preparation for learning their 2, 5 and 10 times tables this year. The children have explored place value to 100, using concrete objects and picture representations to support their learning. They have compared and ordered 2-digit numbers and practised estimating on number lines to 100.

In history, the children have developed their understanding of chronology through their study of The Gunpowder Plot. They looked at a range of sources and created a timeline of events. The children were particularly interested to find out about Guy Fawkes and how the events of 1605 relate to their lives now, when celebrating Bonfire Night on the 5th November each year.

In geography, the children have been so excited to learn about the seven continents and 5 oceans of the world. They have looked at maps and sang songs to help them remember key facts. They have also improved their understanding of positional language when using a compass to find their way around KS1 hall.

In science, the children have investigated animals and humans. They began with some revision from Year 1 of animal classification (mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and fish) and animal diet (carnivore, herbivore or omnivore). They then found out what animals need to survive and looked closely at animal offspring. They also explored animal life cycles.

During Autumn 2, in English, the children will read the text The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark by Jill Tomlinson. They will continue to improve their descriptions using adjectives. They are also going to be writing their own instructions on how to make a witch's potion. The children will be writing acrostic poems inspired by Christmas too.



In maths, the focus on basic skills will continue with children developing their foundational knowledge and practising number bonds and facts to 20. They will begin addition and subtraction within 100.

To support learning at home children should be using the following websites:

https://play.numbots.com

https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button

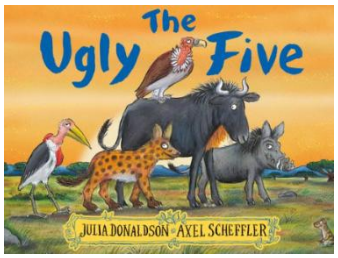
In science, children will be exploring materials. They will go on a material hunt around their own classroom to identify objects and materials. Then, they will investigate the properties of materials

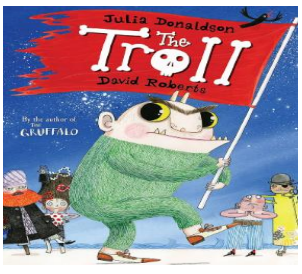
They will carry out different scientific enquiries to explore a variety of materials. They will then gather and present their findings.

In geography, children will be exploring their own local area, Blyth. They will be looking at and making their own simple maps using keys. They will use aerial view maps to locate local landmarks and identify human and physical features. They will continue their learning about the seven continents and the five oceans, using atlases and globes to locate them.

In history, the children are so excited to learn about The Great Fire of London. They will use a range of sources to find out about Samuel Pepys and his fantastic diaries.

The class texts for next half term will be The Ugly Five and The Troll by Julia Donaldson





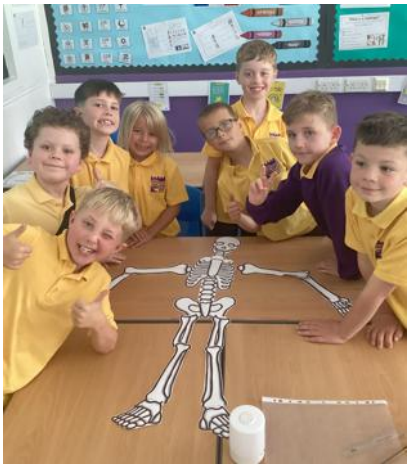
Year 3

Staff would like to start by saying how incredibly proud they are of the children in Year 3. They have all adapted to moving from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 seamlessly and they have taken it all in their stride!

Last half term, in English, Year 3 were excited to create their own character descriptions for Willy Wonka after reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in Year 2. They all enjoyed writing their own beginning to a fantasy story inspired by the picture book Funnybones. They have also written letters to Year 2 to inform them about school life in Year 3.



In maths, the children have developed their understanding of the number system up to 1000. They enjoyed using practical resources to make different numbers and partition them in different ways. This has included understanding how many hundreds, tens and ones are in a number. The children also began to apply their knowledge of number facts from Key Stage 1 to add and subtract numbers up to 3 digits.



In science, Year 3 have learned all about their brilliant bodies focussing on the skeleton and muscles. The children have all loved learning about the purpose of a skeleton and can name a range of bones in the human body. They also investigated how the skeleton moves, using their biggest resource- their own bodies! The children answered the enquiry question - do children with larger feet jump further? They had great fun finding out!

Travelling back 2.6million years ago to the earliest humans, Year 3 really enjoyed learning about the Stone Age through to the Iron Age this half term. After addressing the misconception that the dinosaurs lived at the same time as people, (spoiler alert - they didn't) the children enjoyed discovering how people throughout the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age lived including; changes in diet, what homes they lived in and their daily life, comparing these between the time periods and to their life today. It's safe to say there have been a fair few changes however perhaps not as many as you would think!

In geography, Year 3 have learned all about settlements and land use in the UK. The children looked closely at different settlements in the North East. The children did some virtual field work to investigate their own settlement of Blyth to find out what typical features can be found to identify Blyth as a town.

In PE the children have loved learning different cricket skills and found that hitting the ball is harder than it looks!

Next half term multiplication and division will be the focus of Year 3 maths, beginning to use more formal methods to multiply and divide 2- and 3-digit numbers. To aid with this the children need to be confident with their times tables facts. Last half term, the children revised the 2-, 5- and 10-times table from Year 2 and this half term they will focus on the 3 times table and understanding the inverse. For example, I know 5 x 3 = 15 so I also know 3 x 5 = 15, 15 ÷ 3 = 5 and 15 ÷ 5 = 3. All children have access to TTRS, which is a great computer programme to support you at home (same login details as Numbots).

In science next half term, the children will be learning about rocks and fossils. They will be investigating how fossils are formed and delving deep into the different types of rocks which are on our Earth.

In Design and Technology, Year 3 will be creating their very own purses using their sewing skills.

In PE, they will be focussing on Dance - please ensure your child has the correct PE kit with them every day and earrings are removed on PE days.

The class text will be The Iron Man by Ted Hughes

Melding science fiction with mystery, The Iron Man tells the story of a gigantic metal robot who appears out of nowhere, crashing onto the beach and shattering into many parts. He is discovered by Hogarth, a young boy. The Iron Man proceeds to devour farm machinery, until the farmers rise up against him. But Hogarth soon realises this Iron giant is not here to destroy the Earth and they may need him to save them from a new, more deadly danger.

Year 4



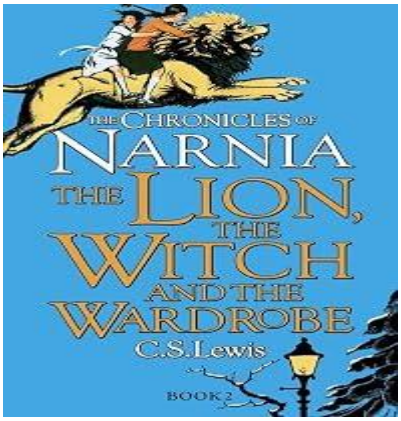
It's been a wild half term in Year 4 as budding scientists they have explored the fascinating world of food chains! From producers and consumers to predators and prey, the children have discovered who's on the menu in different habitats! A real highlight was our fantastic trip to Northumberland Zoo, where we came face-to-face with some incredible animals. Our interactive *Predators and Prey* workshop brought our learning to life, and the children represented the school brilliantly throughout the day!

In history, Year 4 travelled back thousands of years to explore the wonders of Ancient Greece! The young historians used their maths skills to create timelines and became detectives as they investigated fascinating artefacts and historical sources. They particularly enjoyed discovering the origins of the Olympic Games and were amazed by just how different life was for boys and girls in Ancient Greece!

Things have been flowing in geography as the children explored the wonderful world of water! They discovered the journey water takes through the water cycle and investigated local rivers, learning how they shape the landscapes around us.

It's been an adventure-filled half term in PE as Year 4 put their orienteering and map-reading skills to the test! The children developed their ability to follow maps, navigate different routes and work together to solve challenges. All their hard work led to an exciting treasure hunt around the entire school grounds, where teamwork, communication and some brilliant detective skills helped them track down the clues. We may have some future explorers in our midst!

Next half term promises even more exciting learning adventures for Year 4! In science, the children will become mini scientists as they investigate states of matter, exploring solids, liquids and gases and discovering how materials can change. In English, we'll step through the wardrobe into the magical world of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, using this much-loved story to inspire our own historical fiction writing! Meanwhile, in maths, the children will explore area and take on the challenge of mastering their 6-, 7- and 8-times tables. There's plenty to look forward to!

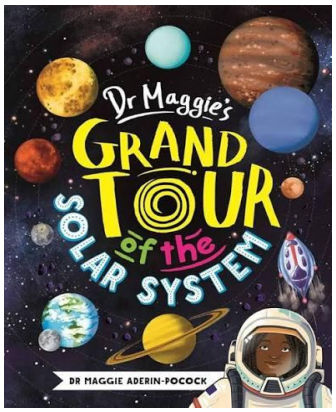


The class text will be *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis. The children will step into the magical world of Narnia, meeting unforgettable characters and exploring the exciting adventures that await beyond the wardrobe!

Year 5

For Year 5, Autumn 1 was an exhilarating dive into the world of the Anglo-Saxons! Through their history lessons, the children were transported back in time, immersing themselves in the thrill of life in an Anglo-Saxon. They delved into the fascinating world of ancient laws and justice, uncovering the often-gruesome punishments dealt out in the past.

In literacy, the children journeyed even deeper into the Anglo-Saxon myths, crafting their own thrilling versions of Beowulf. They also linked their writing to their learning about space by writing fascinating reports on our solar system. They also wrote diaries based on the book Zoo.



The children have been embarking on an exciting journey through space with their key text, *Dr Maggie's Grand Tour of the Solar System* by Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock. This fascinating non-fiction text has captured their curiosity and complemented their science learning about Earth and Space. Through their English lessons, children have been developing their reading comprehension, expanding their scientific vocabulary and exploring the features of informative writing. They have also been using their knowledge and creativity to produce their own engaging pieces of writing, focusing on clear explanations, descriptive language and accurate scientific facts. The text has provided fantastic opportunities for cross-curricular learning, inspiring pupils to ask questions, explore the wonders of our solar system and develop a deeper understanding of the universe around them.

In maths, the children took on the challenge of mastering place value with numbers up to a staggering 1 million! They sharpened their skills, rounding numbers with precision and tackling complex multi-step problems involving addition and subtraction up to 100,000. With determination, they also used inverse operations to confidently check their answers.

Science ignited the children's imaginations as they explored the vast mysteries of Earth and Space. They were captivated by the wonders of our solar system, amazed to learn about Jupiter and Saturn's many moons, and how the Earth and Moon orbit the Sun. Their scientific vocabulary expanded, and their curiosity about the universe reached new heights!

In geography, they have been enjoying a rich and varied programme of learning, developing their knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum! They have been exploring the fascinating continent of South America, discovering its diverse climates, biomes and vegetation belts. They have developed their understanding of how these geographical features influence life across the continent's vibrant countries and bustling cities.

In Art, the children were inspired by the works of Piero della Francesca, experimenting with texture and tone through detailed pen drawings. They then unleashed their creativity with acrylic paints, producing stunning landscapes inspired by the iconic beach huts at Blyth, all while mastering the use of perspective.



PE was packed with action as the children jumped into swimming lessons and honed their netball skills. They thrived on improving their passing, shooting, and defending techniques, and loved competing in mini netball tournaments against each other! Year 5 enjoyed an exciting trip to Concordia Leisure Centre in Cramlington. The children had the opportunity to take part in a range of fun fitness activities - some challenged themselves on the Clip n Climb walls, testing their strength, coordination, and resilience, while others developed their teamwork and focus through a lively session of bowling. Everyone showed fantastic determination, encouragement, and enthusiasm throughout the day, really demonstrating a range of our Horton Values.

In music, Year 5 have been developing their musical knowledge and skills through the Kapow curriculum. They have explored rhythm, melody and pitch, learning to recognise musical patterns and use their voices and instruments

creatively. The children have enjoyed composing, rehearsing and performing their own pieces, developing their confidence, teamwork and musical expression.

Next half term in DT, the children will be getting hands-on in the kitchen for the first time this year, developing their cooking and food preparation skills as they design and make their own homemade pizzas using fresh, seasonal ingredients. In science, our young investigators will explore the properties of materials, conducting exciting experiments to compare, test, and classify different substances based on their characteristics. In maths, the children will be stretching their skills with work on multiples, factors, and rapid recall of multiplication and division facts up to 12 × 12, building confidence and fluency through practice both in class and at home. In PE, pupils will begin a new unit focused on dance, where they will develop their rhythm, coordination, and spatial awareness. This unit will encourage creativity, teamwork, and confidence in performance while promoting physical fitness and self-expression through movement.

You can help prepare your child for next term's learning by exploring the knowledge organisers available on our school website. These provide key facts, vocabulary, and concepts that will be covered in class and are a great way to support your child's understanding at home. Regular practice of times tables is also strongly encouraged, as quick recall of multiplication and division facts will be particularly important for our upcoming mathematics unit.

The class text for next half term is She Wolf by Dan Smith. This is a historical fiction text set in The Anglo-Saxon period.

Year 6

It was fantastic to welcome the children back in September and they have got off to a flying start in Year 6. They have become accustomed to the increased pace of learning and staff have noticed some superb role models for the rest of the school with exemplary behaviour.

The children have enjoyed reading snippets from our text in English, Silverfin by Charlie Higson and have also written their own mystery stories based on this book. Year 6 children have also learnt how to use formal persuasive language in a letter to Mrs Irving in order to apply for a Year 6 job which will involve the increased level of responsibility that we expect to see them developing as they get closer to moving on to secondary school.

Reading is always a huge focus and, in school, children have a reading book and a range of books from which to choose within the classroom. There is a reward system in which children reading at home can be awarded stickers and badges. Children are also accessing Reading Plus in class which helps to build fluency and speed with reading. They can access this on computers at home – well done again to all who are already doing this! Please encourage your child to use this programme at home as we have seen fabulous progress achieved by those who go that extra mile! This also goes for Spelling Shed and TT Rockstars.

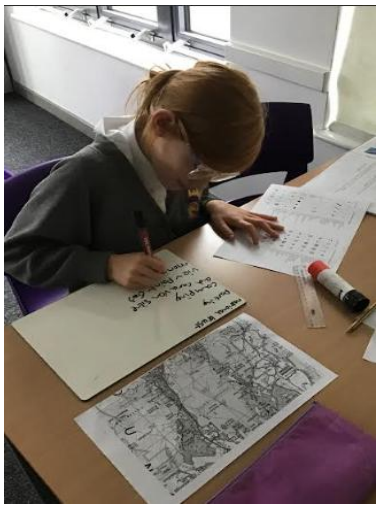
In maths, the children have been learning about place value working with numbers up to 1,000,000 and have now moved on to extending their learning in addition and subtraction.

In science, Year 6 studied the digestive systems of humans and animals, discovering that cows have four stomachs and regurgitate their food! They also recapped learning by identifying that animals, including humans, need the right types and amount of nutrition from what they eat. The children thoroughly enjoyed carrying out an investigation 'How can we make healthy choices by using nutritional information?' by reading food labels and using the knowledge of the eat well plate to choose and find the healthiest snack choice.

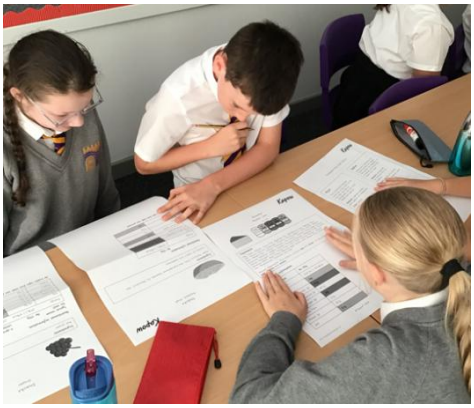


In history, the children have been learning about two major historical events — World War I and World War II — and how these shaped both Britain and the local area of Blyth.

They began by exploring how World War I started, learning about the complex alliances between countries and how the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 triggered a chain of events that led to war across Europe. The children also investigated how WWI impacted Blyth, discovering how the town played a vital role in supporting the war effort through shipbuilding and the work of local people. Moving on to World War II, the children identified significant people such as Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler and about their influence and contributions during the war. They also studied key events of WWII, including the outbreak of war in 1939, the Blitz, evacuation, D-Day and the eventual end of the war in 1945. Throughout the topic, the children have developed their historical thinking skills by discussing how historical interpretations can be affected by misinformation, opinion and propaganda, and why it's important to consider different viewpoints when learning about the past. The children enjoyed comparing life for children during WWII with their own experiences today, looking at how evacuation, schooling and daily life were very different. They also explored rationing, understanding how food shortages changed people's diets and lifestyles, and comparing this with how we live now.



The children have been developing their geographical knowledge by learning about mountains, with a particular focus on the Lake District. They have explored the physical and human features of the Lake District and compared these with our local area of Blyth, considering how landscapes, land use, settlements and the environment differ between the two locations. The children have also been developing their map skills, using atlases, maps and Google Maps to locate and explore places we have been studying. They have been learning to use geographical vocabulary and think more like geographers by asking questions about the places around them. As we look forward to our upcoming Derwent Hill residential, the children have started to think about what they would like to discover for themselves. They have been asking questions such as: "What questions do you have for our upcoming Derwent Hill residential?" This has encouraged them to become curious about the landscape, environment and experiences that await them in the Lake District.



In PSHE, the children have been thinking about "My Healthy Self: How do my choices today shape my future self?" They have been exploring how the choices we make each day can contribute to our health and wellbeing.

In one lesson, the children learned how to interpret traffic light food labels and consider what different colours tell us about the nutritional content of foods. They then explored different food choices and suggested healthier swaps to help create a balanced diet. The children enjoyed discussing their ideas and thinking about how small, positive choices can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

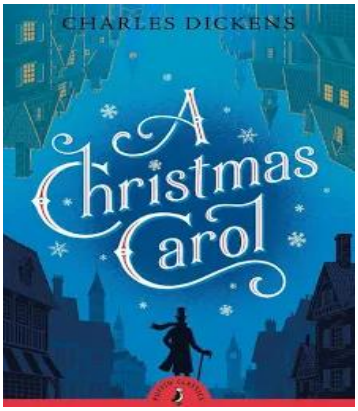
As part of National Poetry Day, our Year 6 children took part in a special live online poetry workshop with poet and author Alan 'Kurly' McGeachie, exploring the theme of Remembrance.

During the workshop, the children explored and reflected on different poetry techniques and considered what Remembrance means to them. They were inspired to craft their own Remembrance poetry, using carefully chosen words and poetic techniques to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Next half term, we will be consolidating the learning that the children acquired during the residential visit to Derwent Hill in the Lake District and extending it further. They will learn about the features of mountainous areas and economic activity in the Lake District and also study Ordnance Survey maps, learning about six figure grid references and contour lines.

In science, the children will be exploring the world of evolution and inheritance. They will learn how living things produce offspring of the same kind, while recognising that offspring are not usually identical to their parents and can have different characteristics. The children will investigate how plants and animals are adapted to suit their environments, exploring the amazing ways living things have developed characteristics that help them survive. They will consider examples from different habitats and begin to understand how variation and adaptation over many generations can lead to evolution.

In DT next half term, the children will be putting their creativity and practical skills to work as they design and make their own Christmas toy using mechanisms. They will explore how different mechanisms can be used to make a toy move and will consider how their ideas can be developed into a successful final product. The children will develop and refine their designs using sketches, diagrams and prototypes before creating their Christmas toys. They will develop their practical skills by measuring, marking, cutting and shaping materials, following a series of steps to bring their creative ideas to life.



Next half term, Year 6 will be reading A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, linked to the newspaper reports we are writing in English. We will also be taking a look at Amazing Evolution - The Journey of Life to support our science topic of Charles Darwin and evolution.

Information around key dates

Parents Evening

There will be a parent's consultation evening on **Wednesday 18 November**. Further information to follow

Statutory Assessment – Key dates

- **Week commencing 14 June: Year 1 phonic check**
- **Week commencing 7 June for 2 weeks: Y4 Multiplication check**
- **Week commencing 10 May: Year 6 SATs**

These dates are set by the Government and school does not have flexibility to change the dates. Therefore, it is that children attend school.

Anti-Bullying Week 2026:

Anti-bullying week will take place from the 16-20 November 2026. The theme is 'Break the silence'. Encouraging children, young people, and adults to start conversations about bullying, speak up safely, listen, and take action together.

THANK YOU TO PARENTS FOR ONGOING SUPPORT

Finally, I would like to thank you for all your on-going support and please remember if you do have any concerns, contact school – we are always willing to listen. We will be setting up some parent forums this year on various themes such as attendance and SEND with an aim that we can continue to work together to ensure Horton Grange provides the very best for your children.

Best wishes
Nichola Irving
Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note whilst we endeavour to stick to these dates, occasionally amendments have to be made in response to other events in school, which are often out of our control. However, if you are unable to make an event, please contact school and we will discuss how the information can be shared in an alternative way.

Dates for the Diary	
Monday 2nd November	**School reopens** Parent Drop-in
Tuesday 3rd November	SEN Drop-in
Thursday 5th November	Year 2 Biscuit & a Book (2:45pm)
Tuesday 10th November	SEN Drop-in Year 1 trip - St Benedicts Church Year 6 Biscuit and a Book (2:45pm)
Wednesday 11th November	Year 5 Biscuit and a Book (2:45pm)
Thursday 12th November	School Photos Nursery Biscuit and a Book
Tuesday 17th November	SEN Drop-in
Wednesday 18th November	Parent Evening
Thursday 19th November	Year 3 Biscuit and a Book (2:45pm)
Friday 20th November	Year 6 trip – ISKCON Temple
Tuesday 24th November	SEN Drop-in
Wednesday 25th November	Year 6 Residential – Derwent Hill
Thursday 26th November	Year 6 Residential – Derwent Hill Year 4 Biscuit and a Book (2:45pm)
Friday 27th November	Year 6 Residential – Derwent Hill
Monday 30th November	Parent Drop-in
Tuesday 1st December	SEN Drop-in
Thursday 3rd December	Year 5 trip – Mosque
Tuesday 8th December	SEN Drop-in Nursery Christmas Performances (9:30am & 2:15pm)
Wednesday 9th December	Rocksteady Performance Reception Christmas Performances (9:30am & 2:15pm)
Thursday 10th December	Year 1 Christmas Performance (9:30am & 2:15pm)
Friday 11th December	Year 2 Christmas Performance (9:30am & 2:15pm) Learning Hub Stay & Play Nursery Christmas Craft Day – Parent Workshop
Monday 14th December	9:30 – 10:15: 6RT – Christmas Event 10:30-11:15: 6LS - Christmas Event 11:30–12:15: 6AH - Christmas Event 1:30-2:15: 3CK/HA - Christmas Event 2:30-3:15: 3ES - Christmas Event
Tuesday 15th December	AM & PM Nursery ELF Xmas Show (AM) – KS1 Hall Reception ELF Xmas Show (PM) – KS1 Hall 9:30 – 10:15: 5ER – Christmas Event 10:30-11:15: 5NW - Christmas Event 11:30–12:15: 5KTE - Christmas Event 1:30-2:15: 4AR - Christmas Event

	2:30-3:15: 4KTH - Christmas Event SEN Drop-in
Wednesday 16th December	Christmas Lunch 2YO Stay and Play Nursery Xmas Party Reception Xmas Party
Thursday 17th December	KS1 and KS2 Xmas Parties
Friday 18th December	Whole School Panto Xmas Jumper Day School Closes 2pm
Monday 4th January	**School reopens**