



# AYCLIFFE DRIVE NEWS #4

Head Teacher Newsletter #4

19th December 2024

Aycliffe Drive Primary School



*1 - Head Teacher's Message*

Dear Parents/Carers,

## **Curriculum and Learning**

It has been a very busy but exciting term, and I am very proud of the learning and resilience our pupils have shown to continue their progress. We want to ensure that we keep you well informed regarding the curriculum and children's achievement. This started in the first couple of weeks of term with our 'meet the teacher' meetings. We then had parent/teacher meetings in November when children's targets were shared with parents. We have another parent consultation day planned for Monday 24th February and further details will be sent nearer the time. Also on the 24th, Mishaal Kayani (our Educational Mental Health Practitioner) is visiting the school to offer support to parents on children anxiety and school avoidance. She will be available between 11:30am and 3:00pm.

In addition to this, Dacorum Family Services provide a similar service to Mishaal that parents can access for support with SEND, anxiety, school avoidance, self-esteem and emotional regulation. Some sessions are run as a surgery or a small group, other sessions work with

children on a 1:1 basis. Please speak to Ms Rumph or Mrs Fitzsimmons for further information.

As a way to keep you informed on the subjects and concepts your child will be learning, we created a curriculum overview per phase which highlights the topics and several objectives covered in each unit. We hope you find these useful in discussing learning with your child. The next overview will be emailed after the Christmas holidays.

### **Attendance**

Our whole school attendance has dropped slightly over the last two weeks. We are at 93.9%. We were doing well in getting closer to 95% and I believe we still can. We have had a bout of chicken pox and sickness; hopefully with rest over the holiday period, pupils will be healthy and ready to be back in school every day.

### **Christmas Fair**

Thank you to the PTA for our most successful Christmas fair yet! It was lovely to see so many of our families and community enjoying the games, music and stalls that were organised by our members. All funds raised during the fair will go into the PTA pot to raise money to improve the KS2 playground. Thank you to everyone who attended and we hope you enjoyed the festivities.

Finally, a huge thank you to our members Kelly King and Dawn Waryszniuk for all their efforts in running our PTA. We are always looking for more members to help with events, and would appreciate any help you are able to offer. Please contact Kelly or Dawn via our Friends of Aycliffe Drive Facebook page.

### **Christmas Performances**

Over the last three weeks, we have been thoroughly entertained by several Christmas performances. Nursery performed their nativity on Thursday 5th December. Mr Channa mentioned that it was such fun and children performed their roles confidently for such a young age. I was fortunate to see both Reception and Key Stage 1 nativities The Landlord's Cat and Born in a Barn. Children performed and sang with great enthusiasm and professionalism - both nativities were amazing in their own right. Thank you to all parents, grandparents and other family members who watched our wonderful children shine like the Christmas star!

### **Staff Leavers**

At the end of this term we are very sad to be losing three members of our support staff, Miss Woolford, Mrs Tadman and Miss Howton.

Miss Woolford has been at Aycliffe Drive for nearly 10 years and has worked as a midday supervisory assistant, cleaner and teaching assistant. She has built great relationships with

the children and staff during her time here and will be dearly missed. We wish her all the best in her new job and her future.

Mrs Tadman has been with us since January 2022. She started as a cleaner, then worked as a midday assistant and most recently a teaching assistant. Mrs Tadman has become a hugely valued member of staff and we are sad to see her go. Good luck to Mrs Tadman in her position at her new school.

Miss Howton started in September 2021 as a midday supervisory assistant before starting her teaching assistant role in September 2022. She has been a very dedicated and reliable member of our staff and it will be strange not having her around. We wish her well and good luck in her new job.

### **Maternity Leave**

Mrs Young will be starting her well deserved maternity leave on 20th January 2025. We hope she gets a good rest in before baby arrives and we look forward to meeting the little one. Mrs Young and Ms Moore will continue to work together in Willow class until Mrs Young starts her maternity leave. Ms Moore will then teach Willow class until the end of July 2025.

## [Star Awards and Kindness Catchers](#)

So far this term we have a number of children being caught doing acts of kindness (Kindness Catcher) or have been awarded the Star Award by their class teacher. Well done to the following children and I know teachers and the kindness catchers are busy looking for more.

### **Kindness Catchers**

Laurel - Kendall, Skye

Willow - William, Pixie

Oak - Jessica

### **Star Awards**

Birch - Finlay

Sycamore - Tudor

Chestnut - Olivia

Laurel - Edie

Willow - Emily

Hawthorn - Zuzia

Maple - Josh

Oak - John-Paul

Redwood - Mayaa

## Safeguarding



### Safeguarding **Team**

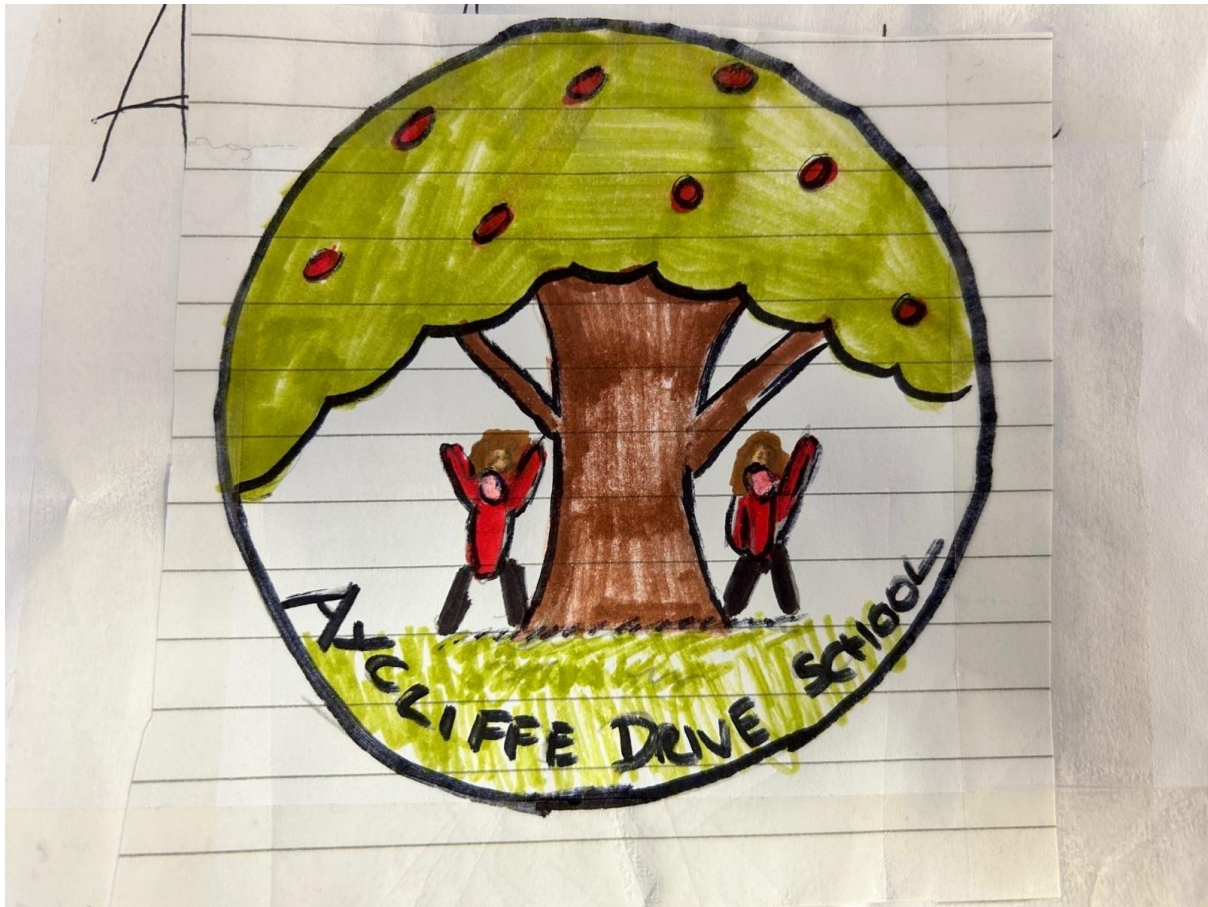
Our safeguarding team is:

- Mrs Atkinson - Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Miss Fitzsimmons - Assistant Headteacher & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Mr Channa - Assistant Headteacher & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs Long - Assistant Headteacher & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Miss Rumph - Mental Health Lead & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

All members of the Senior Leadership Team complete Level 3 training. If you have any concerns regarding the safety of a child please speak to one of the members of the team.

Miss Robson is our attendance lead, and will be in contact with you if concerns arise over your child's attendance. Remember there are new regulations on school attendance, which came into effect as of 1st September 2024.

## Friends of Aycliffe Drive News



### Macmillan Coffee Morning 2024

This certificate is presented to

**Aycliffe Drive School**  
& friends

For your kind contribution of

**£46.25**

To help support those affected by cancer. Thank you.

*Celine*

Celine & the Coffee Morning Team

04 December 2024

2 - Thank you to all that attended our Macmillan Coffee Morning back in September. We raised £46.25 for this amazing charity.

## Key Dates



20/12 - School Closes at 1.30pm for Christmas Holidays

07/01 - Pupils return to school

03/02 - 07/02 - Children's Mental Health Week

06/02 - Nursery Visits for September 2025 at 9.30am and 1.00pm

07/02 - Express Yourself non-uniform day (Children's mental health week)

10/02 - Reception Screening with the Nurses (older children)

13/02 - Nursery Visits for September 2025 at 9.30am and 1.00pm

17/02 - 21/02 - February Half term

24/02 - INSET Day - Parent Consultations

04/04 - School finishes at 1.30pm for Easter Holidays

22/04 - Pupils return to school

## School Information



## Nursery Hours

A reminder that Nursery will be closed on Friday afternoons after the Christmas break. Children who usually attend the Friday PM session are to attend the morning session (8.15am-11.15am).

### **SchoolGrid**

Please ensure meals are ordered for when the children return on Tuesday 7th January. After holidays we have noticed that many children do not have meals ordered which means the kitchen have to prepare a huge number of spare meals.

### **Office hours**

The office is open from 8.00am-3.30pm Monday - Friday. Parents are able to leave an absence message on the school phone before this. Phones will not be answered before 8.00am. Parents are welcome to email [admin@aycliffedrive.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@aycliffedrive.herts.sch.uk) with absence messages, questions or appointment requests.

### **Uniform**

We have a very limited number of Aycliffe Drive woollen ski hats available at the school office at the cost of £1.50 each. If you would like to purchase one of these, please come to the school office with the correct cash.

### **Dacorum Family Service Parent Workshop**

Please find attached details of the next parenting workshop being offered to parents/carers across the whole DFS North & East Partnership area.

**Helping your child with their anger** - This workshop will be held in person at Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School, HP3 8ER on Tuesday 14th January, 9.30-11.00 am (please see flyer below for more details).



### Helping your child with their anger

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Time</b>	09:30-11:00 am <i>Session will be held face to face at Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School in the Myatt Room (HP3 8ER)</i>

#### Does your child display challenging behaviour?

A **free** workshop for parents:

- Why do children display challenging behaviour?
- Understand your child and their responses and behaviour when they're angry
- Strategies and tips to help your child with their anger



For more details and to book a place, please email:

[jnethercoat@hobbshillwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:jnethercoat@hobbshillwood.herts.sch.uk)

Please include contact details and name of child's school when booking

Tel: 01442 401222 Ext: 5

### FREE Workshops For all parents/carers\*

Sessions will be held either online via MS Teams or face to face at Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School HP3 8ER

Life Skills	Date	Time & Location
Secondary School Application – Top tips	Wed 25th September 2024	10.00-11.00 online
Anxiety & Attendance Part 1	Mon 14th October 2024	1.00-3.00 online
Help with your secondary school application form	Mon 21st October 2024	12.30-2.30 Face to face & online
Anxiety & Attendance Part 2 Strategies & Tips	Wed 13th November 2024	10.00-11.30 online
Helping your child with their anger	Tues 14th January 2025	9.30-11.00 Face to face
I've been offered my secondary place - what now?	Tues 25th February 2025	10.00-11.30 online
Helping your child with their worries	Wed 19th March 2025	10.00-11.30 online
Helping your child with their anger	Tues 8th April 2025	10.00-11.30 online
Promoting healthy sleep for your child	Wed 7th May 2025	10.00-11.30 online
Top tips for transition to secondary school	Wed 18th June 2025	10.00-11.30 online

To book your place, please contact

Jan Nethercoat on:

[jnethercoat@hobbshillwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:jnethercoat@hobbshillwood.herts.sch.uk)

Tel: 01442 401222 Ext: 5 (Term time only)

Please include contact details and name of child's school when booking



## Outside of school achievements

[www.girlguides.com](http://www.girlguides.com)



Alicia from Oak attended the IDTA dance competition in Chessington on 24th of November. Alicia won 1st place in her solo and ended up in another dance round with all junior 1st place winners called Champ of Champs. She won another 1st place out of all of them. She won 2nd place in her duo with Eva also from Oak class. Alicia won 1st place with her crew dance (included Eva and Lucy from year 5) and 5th place with her quad dance. Alicia qualified from all 4 categories for National IDTA finals in Blackpool next year March 2025. A huge well done to Alicia! We look forward to hearing how she performs in Blackpool next year.

## Road Safety



We have an ongoing challenge of road safety during drop off and pick up.

We have an increasing amount of cars parking on the yellow zig-zag no stopping zones, which is causing potential danger for our children. We have received a number of concerns from parents and residents regarding this, and I urge that we all be more considerate when bringing children to and from school.

Suggestions to help the situation:

1. Do try to walk, scoot, cycle to limit the amount of traffic on the roads.
2. If driving, do try to park a little distance away (there is parking available on the main road and in the shopping area).
3. Use public transport or car share if possible.

I do accept that some parents are forced to drive to avoid being late for work but hopefully we can work together to alleviate the risk to our children. If parents have any suggestions to help with traffic please do notify our school office team. Also, if you witness any dangerous driving please ring 101.

Thank you for your support and understanding on the safety of our children.

## EYFS



Hello from Foundation Stage!

### **Nursery**

Nursery have had a very busy term! We been working on our positional language and mark making, and have enjoyed doing lots of Christmas crafting and cooking. We also enjoyed performing our Christmas play to the all the parents. Many thanks to all those who came, the children were fantastic. The children really enjoyed their movie morning last week and this week their Christmas party with a visit from Santa! Merry Christmas to all our wonderful children and their families.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2025!

### **Ash/Elm**

We have had another busy few weeks in Reception, with our Nativity performances taking place in addition to our regular activities. I'm sure you'll agree that it was a great success! The children gained so much from taking part, it has been lovely to see their confidence and oracy developing through speech and song.

We have been reading the story, 'Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?' by Martin Waddell. The children practised joining in with the repetitive parts of the story and thought about what helped Little Bear get to sleep, as well as their own bedtime routines. We did role play around the story and made lanterns for the bear using our junk modelling resources.

In Maths we have been securing our knowledge around numbers to 5, including ways of making numbers up to 5, recognising that 2 and 2 makes 4, just as 1 and 3 does also. After the holidays we will be learning about common 2D shapes.

In Phonics, we have been focusing on blending the sounds we have introduced to read short words, known as consonant-vowel-consonant or CVC words. The children are also applying their phonic knowledge to write these words and practice the correct letter formation.

The children have been busy with a range of creative activities, ranging from junk modelling, collaging with natural materials, playdough, cutting and sticking as well as making a range of

Christmas decorations. The children are applying the skills and techniques we show them in adult-led sessions to make bring their imaginative creations to life. We always look forward to seeing what they will create next!

We wish you all a happy and safe holiday, looking forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year.

Best wishes, The Reception Team



3 - Ash/Elm



4 - Ash/Elm



5 - Ash/Elm

KS1



### **Birch**

Birch have been reading 'The Billy Goat's Gruff' and an alternative version of the 'Princess and the Pea' by Rachel Isadora as part of our unit on fairytales. We have been making story maps, writing character descriptions and creating our own versions of Three Billy Goats Gruff.

In Geography, we have been learning about the weather in the UK, how it changes across the seasons and compared it to the weather and seasons in Australia.

In Maths, children have been practising making numbers to 20 in lots of different ways using addition and subtraction.

In PSHE, we have been talking about what it means to be a good friend and how we can help others.

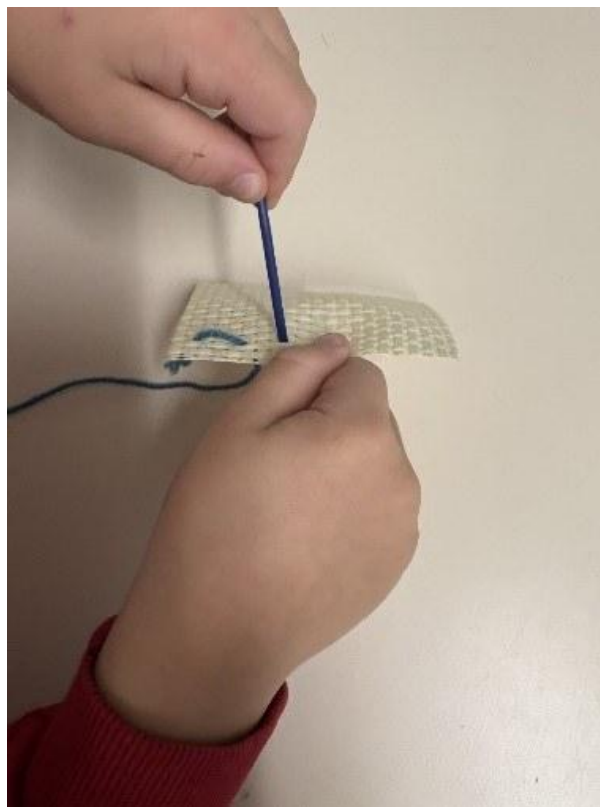
### **Sycamore**

Sycamore have had lots of fun completing their moving picture book based on Humpty Dumpty. We have also been busy developing our sewing skills and we have made our very own Christmas stocking pouch! We all worked really hard to ensure we did a cross stitch and Ms Goss was very proud of us all.

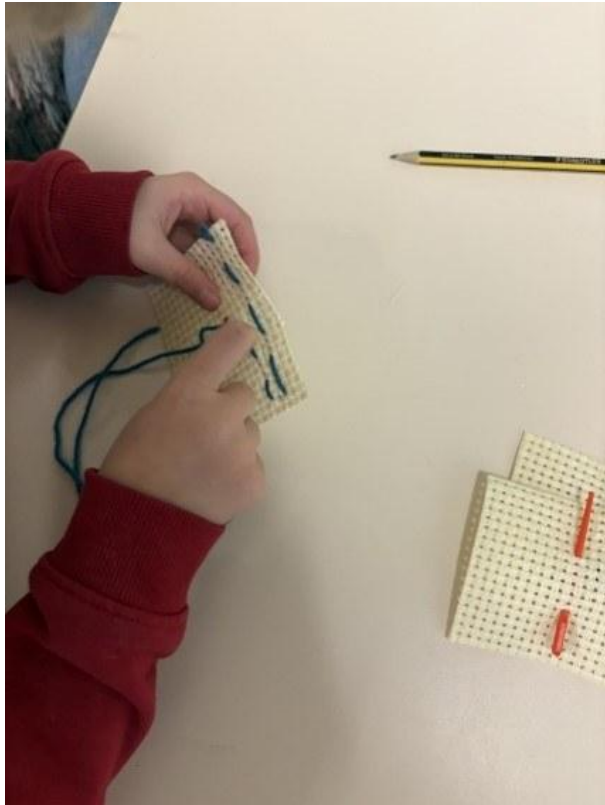
### **Chestnut**

Over the last couple of weeks, Chestnut have finished their DT work to make a moving picture. They used up and down sliders as their mechanisms. We are now starting to learn how to sew a running stitch in preparation for sewing a small pouch.

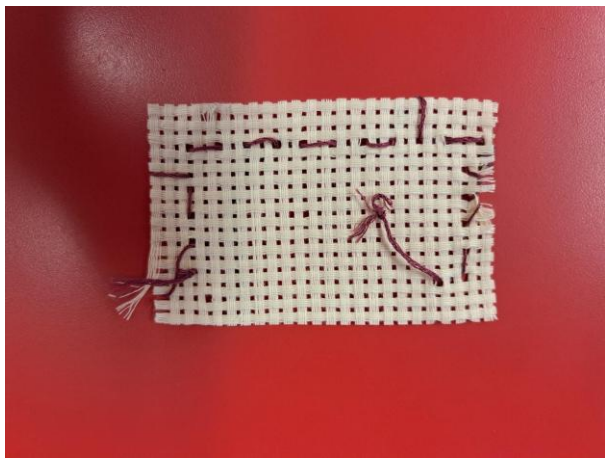
In English we have been reading a book called 'Dragon Post' and learning how to write postcards.



6 - Sycamore



*7 - Sycamore*



*8 - Chestnut*





9 - Chestnut

## Lower Key Stage 2



### **Laurel**

In Laurel we have been creating pneumatic toys as part of our Design and Technology unit. The children have designed their toys, picked out the materials and have been building their monsters to great effect. We've had monsters with wings, antennas and even bow ties! The children have really enjoyed putting these together and have shown their creativity and ingenuity.

### **Willow**

Willow have been working hard experimenting designing and making pneumatic toys in DT. We had to plan the materials we would use, thinking about the weight of the material and

ensuring it was not too heavy for the mechanism to make the toy move. We are extremely proud of the results.

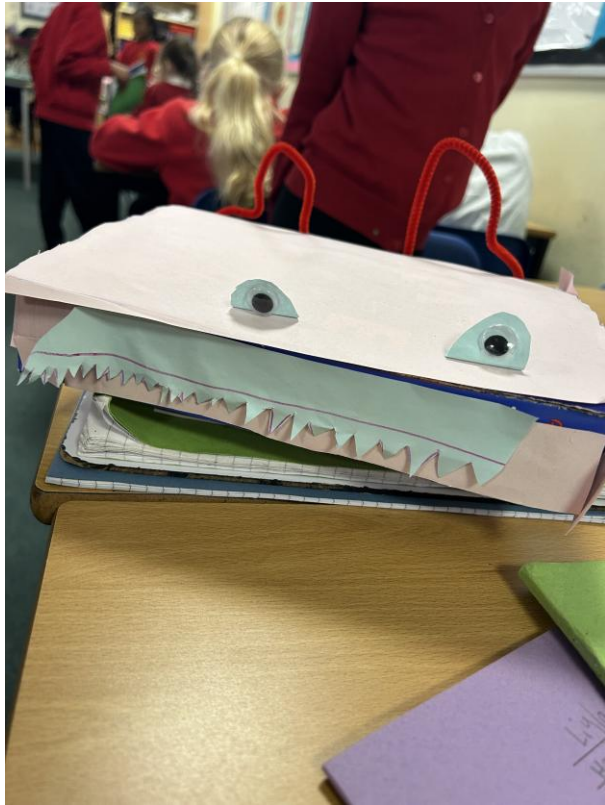
### **Hawthorn**

Over the past few weeks in Science, we have been exploring magnetism by sorting materials into those that are attracted to magnets and those that repel. Some of the results were quite surprising, sparking great discussions among the children.

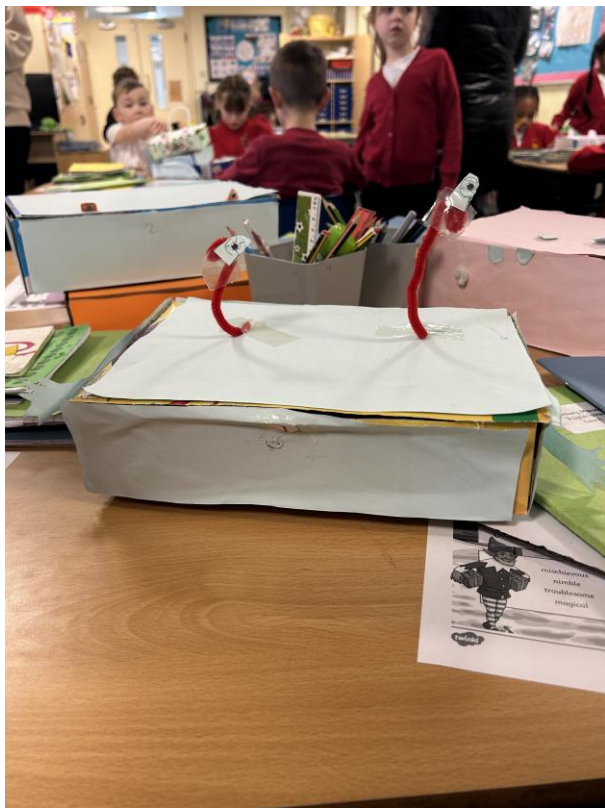
In Design and Technology, we have been busy designing and creating pneumatic-powered toys. This project has allowed the children to apply their problem-solving skills and creativity to produce some fantastic working models.



*10 - Laurel*



11 - Laurel



12 - Laurel



13 - Hawthorn



14 - Hawthorn

## Upper Key Stage 2



### **Maple**

We have been creating our own stuffed toys in DT this half term. First, we designed our toy by considering the main component shapes required and created an appropriate template. Then ,we carefully measured and cut out the fabric. We have focused on running stitch and blanket stitch.



## Oak

**Science:** This term, our Year 5 and 6 children explored the fascinating topic of Earth and Space. They have learned about the solar system, the movement of the Earth and moon, the importance of the sun and the order of the other planets. Through hands-on activities, research and interactive lessons, the children have developed a deeper understanding of how our planet fits into the vast universe. It has been exciting to see their curiosity grow as they uncover the wonders of space!

**Gymnastics:** Diving into the exciting world of gymnastics with a focus on "Flight." Children explored the concepts of balance, control, and movement as they performed various floor routines and used apparatus to simulate flight-like actions. It has been a great opportunity for them to build confidence and teamwork.

**No Pens Day:** Children actively enjoyed developing their oracy skills through engaging activities such as class debates, acting, and oral mathematics. These exercises continue to help children build confidence in speaking, use language precisely and be more expressive.

## Redwood

In DT we used a range of stitching to join fabrics and materials together to make our end product of a stuffed toy. Just in time for Christmas!





16 - Maple



17 - Oak



18 - Oak



19 - Oak



20 - Oak





21 - Redwood