

Fir Tree Newsletter



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April 2025 Issue 373

Dear Families,

I hope you are well and that you have found some time to enjoy the wonderful weather. The spring term is drawing to a close and there are many highlights to reflect on. We have seen wonderful performances from our pupils in Y3 and Y4, along with a large number of pupils representing the school in various sporting competitions. Some new colleagues have joined our team and have settled well, which is testament to the warm welcomes they have received from our school community.

We thank you for attending the recent Parent/Teacher meetings. It is always great to share positive news and next steps with families. Some families have approached us about holding the first Parent/Teacher meetings a little earlier in 2025/26 and this is something we are factoring into our planning. The next formal update on your child's progress will come at the end of the summer term when we send home reports.

Term 5, which starts on Tuesday 22nd April, kicks off with our Y6 residential to Woodlands. We are very much looking forward to hearing about the adventures the children get up to! Soon after, it will be SATs week for most Y6 pupils in England. You may know that the test scripts are marked externally, so we won't know how our pupils did until early July. Term 5 is a short term (taking into account 2 bank holidays) and there is lots to fit in – including our charity fun run in aid of Style Acre. You can sponsor your child via this link https://www.justgiving.com/page/fir-tree-funrun?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL which we hope you are able to share with friends and family.

Ahead of the Easter break, we wanted to say how wonderful it is to see pupils looking so smart in their school uniform. It definitely creates a strong sense of belonging! This will be a message we will be reinforcing across school in the coming weeks and months.

A reminder that the new term starts at the usual time on Tuesday 22nd April. We will finish for the May half term break on Friday 23rd May at 3.15.

Term 6, the final half term of the year, starts on Tuesday 3rd June (Monday 2nd June is an INSET day). The school year ends on Friday 18th July at 2.15.

We very much hope you enjoy a relaxing and peaceful Easter break.

Warm regards,

Mr Knight



A huge thank you to our amazing PTA for organising another silent disco for the children. The children (and Staff!) had a wonderful time.



FIR TREE PTA

EASTER VIRTUAL BALLOON RACE
100% Eco Friendly

BALLOONS LAUNCH
12:00 PM
SUNDAY 20TH APRIL

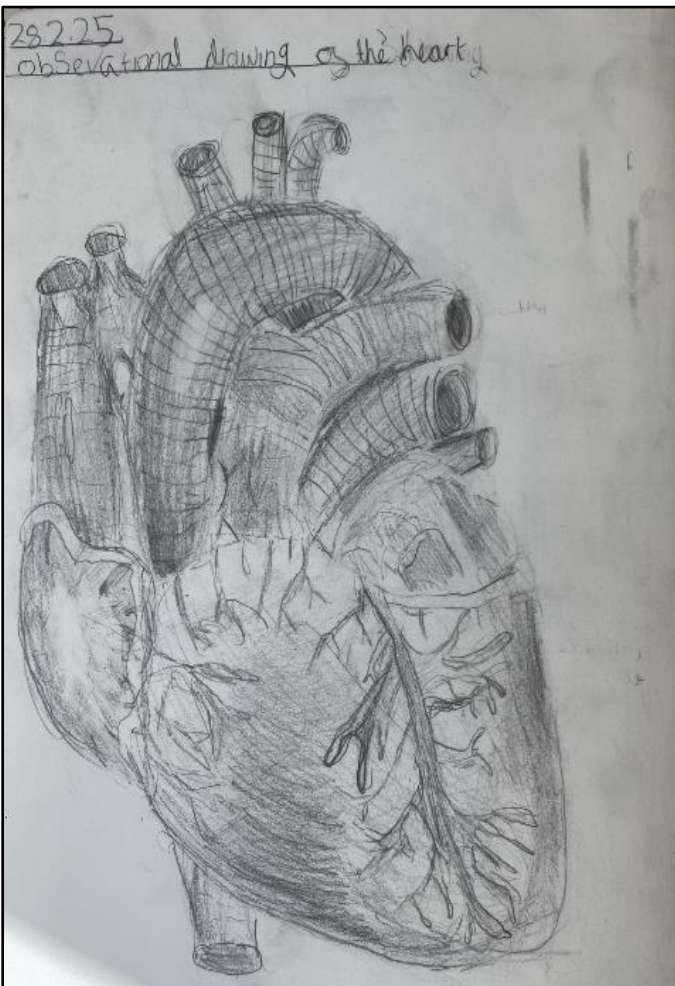
Use your skill to design a (virtual) balloon which will fly over Nairobi for 7 days

Scan the QR code to start designing.

Balloons £3 each
Great Prizes to be won!

News from Cherry – Year 6

Cherry Class have had a fantastic few weeks learning about the circulatory system. In art, there were some stunning observational drawings of the heart which used tone and shading to make it look realistic and three dimensional. We have been reading Pig Heart Boy by Malorie Blackman, a story about a young boy called Cam who has a heart transplant from a pig. Our writing has been based on this text and we have done lots of drama surrounding this. We have debated whether xenotransplantation is morally right or wrong, as well as doing a conscience alley to advise Cam on whether or not to get the transplant. We then wrote persuasive letters based on this advice. As well as this, we imagined that we were news reporters reporting on the breaking news that a young boy has just been the first person to ever have a heart transplant from a pig. Everyone was fantastic at getting into character and imagining the scenario from different perspectives.

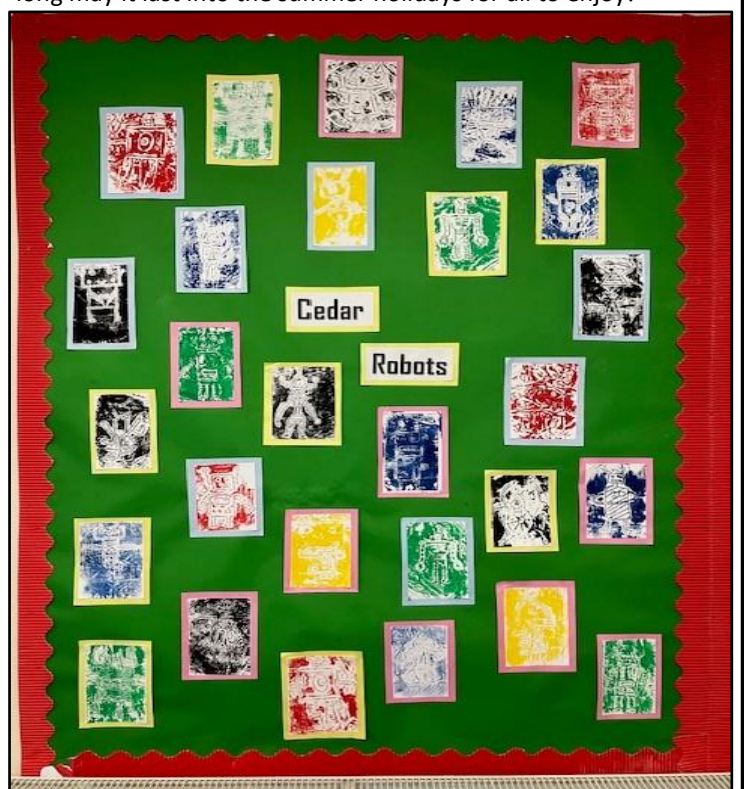


DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 4 th April	End of term 4 – 2:15pm finish
7 th – 17 th April	Easter Holidays
Friday 18 th April	Good Friday
Monday 21 st April	Easter Bank Holiday Monday
Tuesday 22 nd April	Term 5 begins
22 nd – 25 th April	Year 6 Woodlands Residential
Tuesday 22 nd April	Maple swimming
Wednesday 23 rd April	Ash swimming
Tuesday 29 th April	Maple swimming
Wednesday 30 th April	Ash swimming
Monday 5 th May	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 6 th May	Maple swimming
Wednesday 7 th May	Ash swimming
Tuesday 13 th May	Maple swimming
Wednesday 14 th May	Ash swimming
Tuesday 20 th May	Maple swimming
Wednesday 21 st May	Ash swimming
Friday 23 rd May	Term 5 ends – 3:15pm finish

News from Cedar – Year 4

Cedar Class have been busy developing their printing skills both using both polystyrene tiles and tooling aluminium. The theme of robots was inspired by our class book about The Iron Man by Ted Hughes, a story which has proven timeless and very popular within the class with a perfect blend of imagination, adventure and trepidation! They designed different robots in their sketch books, then chose different aspects they liked best from each to make a print onto tooling aluminium using ball point pens. The top tip was to press hard to ensure all the design was clear and bold on the metal. They then printed using each side of the aluminium. The colours were reversed on some of the prints. The beautiful daffodils were created on the polystyrene tiles and help to mark the beginning of beautiful spring weather – long may it last into the summer holidays for all to enjoy!



News from Year 4

Wow! What a busy term we've had!

Just in case you hadn't heard, Maple and Ash classes have been up to their eyes and ears producing their own show: Yes, the Jungle Book. It would therefore be prudent to dedicate the Year 4 slot of the newsletter to congratulate them all on their incredible work. It has taken an enormous amount of time, thought and dedication to pull off this gargantuan feat. But, wasn't it worth it?

The Year 4 teaching team are unbelievably proud of all the children for their stunning performances. From initial auditions to performing the show in front of a live audience of family and friends, it has been an amazing journey, paved by resilience, persistence and nervous energy. Their dedication and hard work have truly shone through, and it was heart-warming to see them come together as a team to bring the story to life. The enthusiasm and talent displayed on stage were nothing short of remarkable! The children have truly 'got into role'. They have learnt the art of expressing the emotions of joy, annoyance, love and devotion, anger, and boastfulness through their particular characters. They have remembered complex lines and lyrics, the sequencing of scenes, and interacting with each other on stage. The backstage team have learnt to be discreet and attentive in order to support those on stage with props.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in making this production a success. The costumes were absolutely fantastic, and it is evident that a great deal of effort went into their creation. A special mention is owed to Mrs Parker, Mrs Walton, Mrs Joy, and Alex (Tristan's mum) for their creative flair in designing the scenery. The transformed stage was a sight to behold and added so much to our performance.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support and contributions to our school community. Your involvement makes a significant difference, and we are grateful for all that you do.

Wishing you and your family a restful and enjoyable holiday season!



News from Chestnut – Year 5

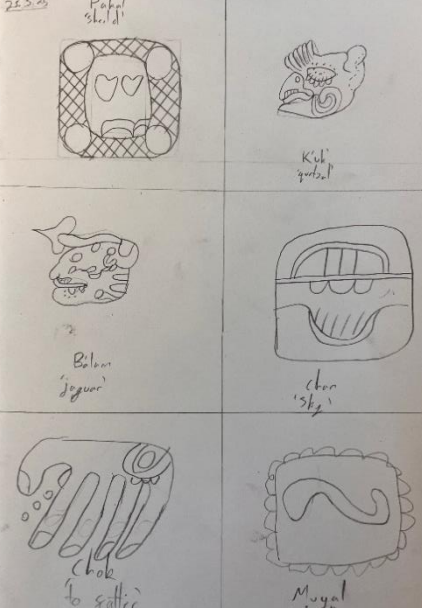
Chestnut class have been deepening their knowledge of the fascinating Ancient Maya. In History, we've enjoyed exploring their beliefs and rituals; we made careful notes in our books with pictures to prompt our understanding and used a Kahoot quiz to test our memory of the facts we'd learned. We loved learning about the different Gods and Goddesses and created information pages about them, thinking about their responsibilities, personality and physical features. In Art, we've been learning about Mayan 'glyphs' and have tried our best to recreate these using our sketching skills; we're looking forward to translating these into a design for a hot chocolate pot!

Tuesday 18th March
 To: To investigate beliefs and rituals of the Ancient Maya



- Some Maya ~~believed~~ believed the Earth had the form of a turtle floating on a vast sea.
- 4 mighty gods called Bacabs held up the sky.
- A Ceiba tree was planted by Huracan; as it grew it ascended the sky upwards.
- The first creation saw the gods formed people out of clay; the mud people were not very pleasing as they could not walk or talk very well. The second race of men were made of wood; these people were better and could walk talk & multiply. However their hearts & minds were empty and the gods sent a flood on them. maize was used to create the third race of men; however they were too perfect as a result they ~~took~~ took some of their vision.
- The Maya believed there are 3 separate realms; Upperworld, Middleworld & Underworld (which are all connected by a Ceiba tree).
- Xibalba (meaning place of fright) was a city in the underworld; here souls would be tortured by demons.
- To gain favour with the gods Mayan people would do a sacrifice.

26.3.25



P'oh
 sh'it
 K'oh
 q'oh'ol
 Balon
 'jaguar'
 'oh
 'sky'
 'oh
 'scatter'
 M'ogal
 'clasp'



News from Willow – Year 3

This term, Willow class were introduced to, 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes in reading and writing lessons. We looked at opening to the Iron Man and identified the features of a successful story opening, such as; powerful vocabulary, expanded noun phrases, similes and different sentence structures. Then, using some of the techniques used by Ted Hughes in The Iron Man, we wrote our own version of the opening. Willow class have done a great job. Here are some examples of their fantastic work.

Just before sunrise, the Iron Man stood on the verge of the cliff. Who invented him? It was a mystery. What was he made of? It was a mystery. Why is he here? It was a mystery. Bigger than a giraffe gnawing leaves from a tree, a mysterious metal monster perched on the tip of the 9000 or tall cliff, on the very edge, under the moonlight. The wind whistled through his dusty, creaky iron fingers. His huge iron head, shaped like a double decker bus but as tall as wide as a city, rapidly faced the right, rapidly faced the left. His iron ears twitched tensely. He was listening to the calm sea.

His eyes, like blinding torches, flickered peach, then magenta, then iron, spying the wavy sea. Never before had the ~~iron man~~ robot come face to face with the sea. He rocked slowly in the fierce storm that pushed against his iron back. He rocked forward, on the tip of the steep cliff.

And his left foot, his massive iron left foot, ascended up, out into the the endless void of the cliff into the unknown. Crash!

Writing the opening to The Iron Man

Just before sunrise, the Iron Man stood dead still on the verge of the enormous cliff. What is his ~~perp~~ purpose? It was a mystery. What is his he capt capable of? It was a mystery. Who invented him? It was a mystery. Stronger than a horse leading a cart, a colossal figure perched perched on the tip of the cliff, on the very edge, in the dusk of night, his wind whistled gently through his dusty dented fingers. His tremendous iron head, shaped shaped like the grand Colosseum but as tall as a tower in London, had gradually twirled. It to up gradually twirled down. His iron ears twitched this way that way. He was listening to the raging, relentless sea.

His eyes, like sizzling pancakes, flashed mustard yellow then tiger orange orange, then scarlet, then berry, inspecting the sea. This was the first time he had come face to face with the sea. He rocked slowly in the gentle breeze that that calmly touched his back. He rocked towards the top of the steep rocky face of the cliff.

And his hairy foot, his gargantuan iron hairy foot, ascended up out into the endless void, and the Iron Man leapt into thin air. Bang! Smash! Thud!

Easter Word Search



w	b	s	i	n					
b	t	u	k	u	i	i			
l	a	i	n	c	u	n	h	d	
o	s	b	n	i	z	r	d	l	
g	y	k	b	y	h	n	u	n	a
e	d	e	a	m	c	c	o	h	m
c	n	t	r	t	k	i	o	o	b
c	a	s	n	l	t	l	e	s	y
b	c	u	i	a	i	q	p	l	v
v	h	n	c	d	k	r	x	o	p
g	a	n	i	n	s	r	c		
v	y	s	a	n	p	g	i	f	t
i	g	p	g	l	h	s			
e	i	f							

eggs	spring	hunt	gift
bunny	April	candy	sun
rabbit	Sunday	vacation	duckling
chick	basket	lamb	holiday

How Nurturing Programme Parent Groups have helped other parents

"I am a much more confident, positive and understanding parent. I feel much more able to cope now."

"We are having less family arguments and the household is a lot calmer."

"The group was fun. It's the only two hours I have for myself each week."

"The atmosphere was really relaxed. No-one judged anyone and everyone was listened to and respected."



Check out emotionalhealth.org.uk for more information on *The Parenting Puzzle* book and The Nurturing Programme

The 10-week Nurturing Programme for parents and carers

Where: Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre
96a Wilding Road
Wallingford
OX10 8AJ

When:
10 week course during term time
8th September - 24th November
Mondays 12.30-2.30

Contact details:

For more information or to book on to the course please email info@wallingfordfamilycentre.com



The Nurturing Programme

Information for Parents and carer

How to get the best out of family life



Practical information

Partners are welcome and it's also fine to come on your own or with a relative or friend

There are ten 2-hour sessions with a tea and coffee break

8-10 parents are invited and there are two trained group leaders

Some groups provide a Crèche; check with group leaders beforehand

You need to come to all ten sessions as they fit together like a puzzle



What is the Nurturing Programme?

Children are rewarding, stimulating and fun, but looking after them can be stressful and challenging.

The Nurturing Programme helps deal with those challenges so that you can have a calmer, happier life.

A tried and tested programme, it helps us think about what we do, why we do it and how it makes us feel.

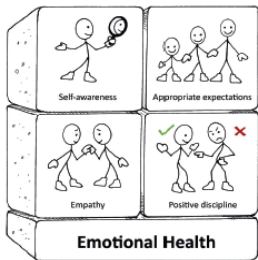


What does it cover?

Over the 10-week Programme, you will look at lots of different topics, including:

- Understanding why children behave as they do
- Recognising the feelings behind behaviour (ours and theirs)
- Exploring different approaches to discipline
- Finding ways to develop co-operation and self-discipline in children
- Learning the importance of looking after ourselves

The Four Constructs of the Nurturing Programme



THE NASIO TRUST'S EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Date: Sat 12th April
Venue: Abbey Buildings, OX14 3JB
Time: 10 AM - 2 PM
Entry: £5 for children (ages 3-12)
Free for all others

****Children's entry includes:****
Egg hunt, egg and spoon race and pin the tail on the bunny

Join us for an egg-celent day of fun, activities, and excitement for the whole family!

Keep an eye out for further details!
Any queries please email divya.godbole@thenasiostrust.org

Scan to register your interest!

The perfect way for girls aged 5-11 to get involved with football

Wild CATS GIRLS' FOOTBALL

Make Friends

TIME AND DATE
Sundays 9.30-10.30

LOCATION
Cholsey Recreational Ground

COST
up to £2

WHO WE ARE
Beth Reeves - Cholsey Bluebirds Football Club

NEXT STEPS
head to www.EnglandFootball.com/wildcats to book your first session, or contact us to find out more betnglyde@hotmail.com 07957 545873

Free! Cholsey Fun Day

Monday 14 April
10am-3pm
Cholsey Pavillion, Station Road, Wallingford, OX10 9PT

Football

Born to Move Fun Games

Xplorer

Family Fun Fitness Boxercise

New Age Kurling

For more information and to book, visit southandvale.gov.uk/holidayactivities or scan the QR code

[/SouthandValeActiveCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/SouthandValeActiveCommunities)

Free! Didcot Fun Day

Wednesday 9 April
10am-3pm
Didcot Leisure Centre OX11 8AY

Fun Games

Born to Move Badminton

Pickleball

Family Fitness Table Tennis

Bouncy Castle

For more information and to book, visit southandvale.gov.uk/holidayactivities or scan the QR code

[/SouthandValeActiveCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/SouthandValeActiveCommunities)

BORN TO MOVE LES MILLS

Combining moves from martial arts, sports conditioning, dance and yoga. Leave feeling fitter, more mentally energized and able to take on the world.

Wed 23 April - 21 May
4-4.45pm - Reception - Year 3
4.45-5.30pm - Year 4-6
Cholsey Pavillion, Station Road, OX10 9PT

To book please scan the QR code below or visit southandvale.gov.uk/TermTimeActivities