

# Fir Tree Newsletter



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January 2025 Issue 370

Dear Families

I hope this update from school, the first of 2025, finds you well. Lots of colleagues, myself included, have been struck down with winter bugs, but we are optimistic we are through the worst with this.

A warm welcome to Mrs Durman who joined us recently and is teaching Maple class. As ever, there is lot planned for the spring term, including various sports tournaments and lots of enrichment activities. A reminder that we love to hear about achievements from outside of school, so please send any details to the school office.

The next formal opportunity you will get to find out how your child is doing will be at the Parent/Teacher meetings which will take place towards the end of the spring term in March. We will be in touch with further details shortly.

School Council met recently and are finalising plans for our school to adopt a local charity which we hope to support for a period of time. More will follow on this.

One or two people have asked us about term dates for the 2025/26 academic year. We are in the process of finalising these and will be in touch with you shortly.

You may have seen local media reports on the planned changes to Fir Tree School, which are expected to take effect from September 2026. We look forward to, over time, sharing further information with you.

Term ends at the usual time on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February. We look forward to welcoming pupils back into school for the start of term 4 on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Warm wishes for a happy and productive spring term.

Mr Knight

## More fantastic achievements from Fir Tree pupils!

A huge well done to Emilia, Maisie and Evie and in Year 4 who took part in their first gymnastics competition in December. They each had brilliant success, scooping 10 medals and 6 ribbons between them. Emilia also won the All Around

Trophy in her group. We are very proud of them!

Isla in Year 3 also won two gold medals and an All Around Champion Gymnast for her group.

Well done girls!



## News from Ash – Year 4

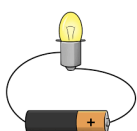
In Ash Class, we have begun learning about electricity. Our first lesson involved identifying different appliances and deciding whether they were mains or battery powered. Our second lesson focused on making circuits and exploring what was essential when making a lightbulb turn on.

***“The battery provides the electricity.”***

***“The wires help carry the electricity from the battery to the bulb.”***

***“The bulb provides the light.”***

Our next lesson will be exploring complete and incomplete circuits.



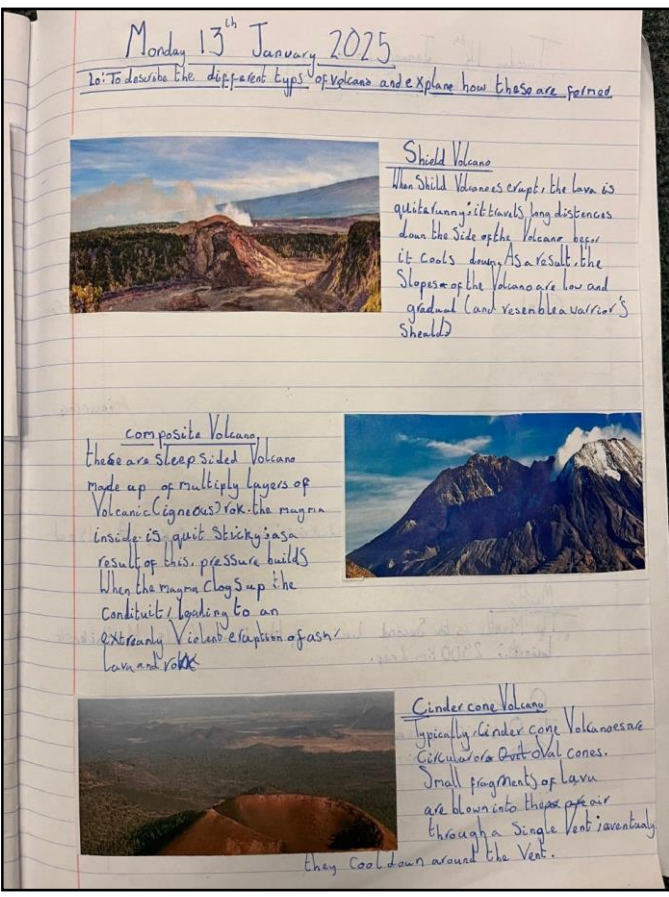
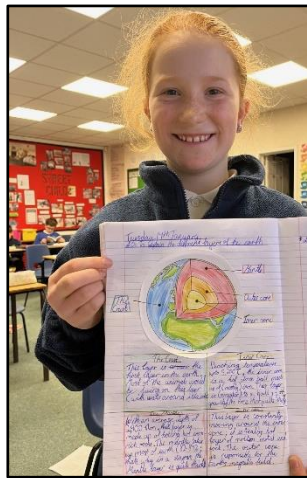
## News from Chestnut – Year 5

Chestnut have hit the ground running this year with a brilliant start to the term – we've been full of enthusiasm as we've begun investigating our 'Extreme Earth' geography-based project.

To help us learn more about the layers that make up our Earth, we used playdough to make our own models.



We've discovered that Earth's structure has resulted in the formation of volcanoes; we wanted to find out about how many different types of volcanoes there are and so we got investigating! We came up with some fun actions to help us remember the different types (for example – stratovolcanoes involved heavy mental moshing because they are so explosive!). We learned about the sequence of what happens during an eruption so that we can write an explanation all about it – our story maps and actions helped us to remember key vocabulary, phrases and connectives.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Y3 Cake Sale – 3:15pm
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 3 Dance Festival – New Theatre
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> January	Y6 – Wallingford School Production
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Create Music Guitar performance
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 5 swimming
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> January	PTA AGM – 6pm at Fir Tree
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 6 Woodlands Meeting – 3:30pm
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5 swimming
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5 swimming
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 3 Production – 1:45pm
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	End of term 3 – 3:15pm finish
17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> February	Half term
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Term 4 begins – 8:45am

## News from Maple – Year 4

I'm thrilled to say that both Maple Class and myself have had a great start to the new term, getting to know each other. They have really impressed me with their enthusiasm and dedication to learning.

To start with, and to compliment this term's humanities curriculum – The Tudors – we have been reading 'A Mid-Summer Night's Dream' by William Shakespeare. The children have really enjoyed talking about, and describing the characters from the story, and discussing the intricate story plot. The class have written character and descriptions, using challenging vocabulary. In Science we've been exploring the fascinating world of electricity and circuits. The children have shown great enthusiasm as they learn about the basics of electrical circuits, and how to construct one. Next week, they will be focusing on problem solving.

In PE, children are learning some of the skills used in cricket. Last week, they have been honing overarm bowling techniques. They are picking up the skills quite well and are enjoying the teamwork aspect of the game. Encouraging them to practice their bowling at home would be a great way to enhance their skills and foster a love for the sport.

Additionally, our history lessons have delved into the intriguing era of the Tudors. We're examining how the Tudor period began following the Wars of the Roses and the societal structure that defined this important time in British history.



## News from Year 6

The first couple of weeks back have been action packed for Year 6!

We have been doing Bikeability, in which we have been learning how to cycle safely on the road and what different road signs mean. We have also learnt what action to take if there is an accident on the road. Everybody showed real perseverance during their sessions, especially during the cold weather – well done Year 6!

As part of our Ancient Egyptian topic, we were also lucky enough to visit the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. We had a fantastic day looking around the Ancient Egyptian galleries where we explored everyday objects, statues of pharaohs and even actual mummies! Did you know that Ancient Egyptians ate ostrich eggs and then drilled a hole in the bottom of the shell to use it as a drinking vessel? We also had the opportunity to look around the rest of the museum and sketch some of the amazing artefacts that we found.



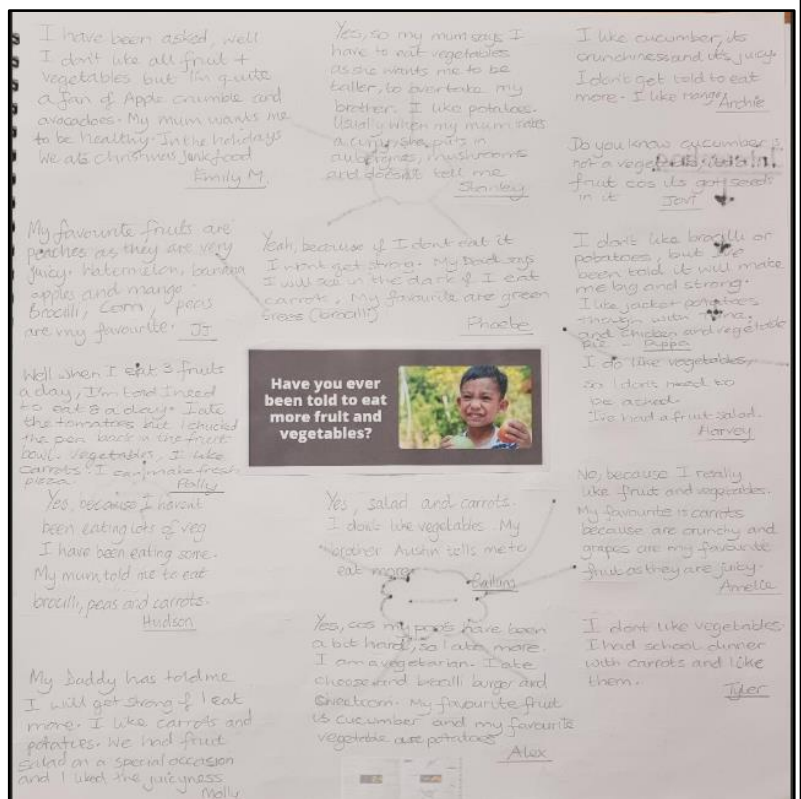
## News from Willow - Year 4

Willow class have had a fantastic start to the term. In science, we have been learning about nutrition and how to maintain a balanced diet for good health. Willow have learnt about the main nutrients found in food that is used by the body for energy, growth and repair. These are carbohydrates, proteins, fats, fibre, vitamins, minerals and water. We have learnt the meaning of these words, and Willow loved coming up with fun actions to help them remember the names of each nutrient.

In addition to this, Willow were asked the following two questions:

- Have you ever been told to eat more fruit and vegetables?
- What if you only ate chips?

We had a very interesting discussion about both of these questions. Pictured here are some of the children's responses.



## FOOD HYGIENE RATING

0 1 2 3 4 5

VERY GOOD

Please join us in congratulating Siva and Sanusha for retaining their 5 star food hygiene rating after last week's unscheduled inspection visit!

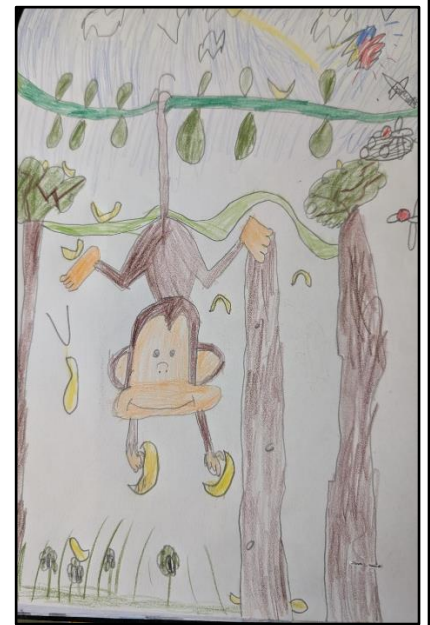


## News from Cedar – Year 3

In Cedar Class this term, we are gearing up for our production of 'The Enormous Crocodile' on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February, at 1.45pm. Rehearsals are well under way with learning of songs and dances, creating of artwork and music and actors are learning their lines well. There was a great excitement in the air this week as the stage was erected in the hall. (Big shout out to Milly and Darcy in Year 6 for their kind help with this!) Down in choreography corner, the class put forward their ideas for our elephant dance in our upcoming show. Their ideas showed great creativity and captured the caring and cooperative side of elephants.

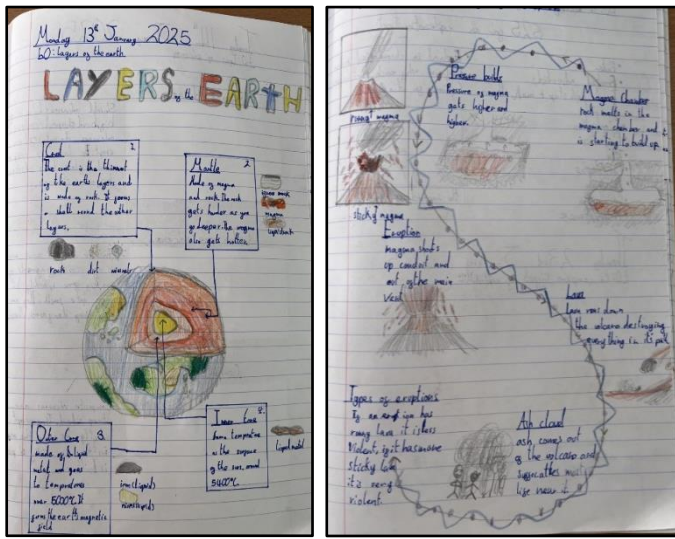
In Art, we used a step-by-step video guide to draw a monkey dangling from a tree. This is a very popular tutorial website which gives children the confidence to draw a range of different animals, objects and characters which great success.

Away from our production rehearsing, in science work we have been thinking about healthy eating. We have learnt about the different food groups and what each food group does for our body. We can identify which groups food belong to and have considered how much of each type of food we need (or should have) with the Eatwell Guide to be in peak condition. This learning has produced rich discussions and debates in class.



## News from Sycamore – Year 5

Sycamore have been using their retrieval skills to research information about how volcanoes erupt. We have investigated and explored the features of volcanoes, types of volcanoes and types of eruption. This is leading towards writing our own explanations for how volcanoes erupt. During our planning for this, we have used drama and story mapping to help consolidate our learning.



We continue to receive complaints from parents and neighbours regarding the roads outside school at the end of the school day.

Whilst school has no official jurisdiction over this area, we politely request that all parents collecting their child from school by car are respectful of our neighbours and each other. Most of the complaints we receive are following near-miss accidents where children have almost been hit by a car but there have been some reports of 'road rage' and recently a neighbour was nearly knocked off her bicycle by a parent in a car.

If you witness an incident on the roads outside school, or inconsiderate parking, we urge you to report it to the police using the non-emergency line (101). We have asked the Community Policing Team to come and be a presence to try and calm things down but unfortunately they are too busy. We feel that if more people report these occurrences to the police, we may have a better chance of getting help from them.

If your child walks home from school by themselves, please remind them of the importance of road safety – particularly when crossing roads.



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# PTA

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### ALL WELCOME

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 6pm

At Fir Tree Junior School