



# HORMEAD (VA) CofE FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

## Newsletter

*"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" John 10:10*



Issue No: 12 25/26

### Dear Families,

Welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed a restful and happy half term with your children. Whether you were lucky enough to go on holiday or simply embraced some slower days at home, I hope there were moments of real quality time together. Those shared experiences, big or small, become even more precious as children grow older, as I'm finding with my own!

As teachers, we too are always learning, continually refining and strengthening our practice. This term, our professional focus has been oracy, which is gaining strong national recognition as a foundational pillar alongside literacy and maths. The ability to articulate ideas, reason clearly and listen thoughtfully underpins success across the curriculum, and far beyond school life.

This week, Mrs Guillian led staff training to share her recent professional development in this area. We explored how high-quality talk sits at the heart of effective learning. The way adults interact with children, through careful questioning and purposeful dialogue, can genuinely extend thinking, deepen understanding and build confidence. We looked at several strategies to bring into classrooms, many of which work just as powerfully at home.

For example, if you're reading together and ask, "Why is the squirrel worried?" your child might say, "His leaves are gone." That could be the answer you were looking for but why not follow-up with questions like "Tell me more about that," or "this happened last year - what could that mean?" which opens the door to a much richer discussion about autumn, seasons and change. It's in those extended conversations that deeper understanding really develops. Throughout this term, we'll be creating even more opportunities for children to discuss, reason, debate and share their ideas confidently across the curriculum.



This week, it has also been lovely to feel the first hint of Spring in the air. The brighter weather has lifted everyone's spirits and made playtimes even more energetic! We were incredibly proud of the children during our fire drill - our evacuation time is becoming impressively quick. Even our youngest "Hoglets" were whisked out promptly in their new trolley, which caused great excitement while keeping everyone safe.

Looking ahead, we are very much looking forward to World Book Day next week. I spoke to the children in assembly about trying to avoid superhero costumes this year, as we are working hard to reduce the play-fighting that has begun to creep in. Football kits are also best saved for sportier days - unless, of course, the outfit represents a particular book character who happens to be a footballer! There will be prizes for the most original and best-presented costumes, and we can't wait to see the creativity shine.

As always, thank you for your continued support. This week you should be able to spot a music theme flowing through our class news.

*Lynda Cowler*, Headteacher

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



## Reasons to Celebrate

### Class Stars of the Week



You make us so proud!

Hedgehogs	<b>George Hayden</b>	For increased concentration in class
Hedgehogs	<b>Mia Hart</b>	For always trying her best and aiming high
Cherry	<b>Lenny Berger</b>	For showing lots of interest and enthusiasm for our class topic.
Cherry	<b>Theo Foskett</b>	For an amazing effort in phonics!
Willow Y1	<b>Oliver Ambler</b>	Working so hard on his "oi Frog!" poem and his effort with handwriting
Willow Y1	<b>Leo Darmody</b>	Writing and reading his poem so beautifully to the whole class!
	<b>Alex Baker</b>	For amazing learning in maths, grouping tens and ones and working out tens and ones in numbers to 50.
Birch Y2	<b>Alyssia Tache</b>	Being kind and helpful in class
Birch Y2	<b>Eva Jechorek</b>	For showing enthusiasm in her learning
Oak Y3	<b>Millie Eves</b>	For trying really hard in all her learning, especially handwriting
Oak Y3	<b>Edie Hall</b>	For a noticeable determination to demonstrate her learning in every lesson!
Oak Y4	<b>Yarchyk Kozub</b>	For always being polite and respectful to adults around the school
Oak Y4	<b>Noah Davidson</b>	For having a fantastic first week back at school

### Values Hearts



<b>Love</b>	<b>Sophia Barlow</b>	For helping a friend balance whilst walking on a plank
<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>Gracie-May Belford</b>	For always being a team player
<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>Chester Davidson</b>	For showing an enjoyment in sensory time.
<b>Courage</b>	<b>Louis, Brooke, Yarchyk</b>	For showing courage in French to say words in front of the class
<b>Courage</b>	<b>Penny, Theo, Harry, Sienna</b>	For showing courage in French to say words in front of the class.
<b>Kindness</b>	<b>Spencer Britton</b>	For offering to pick things up for others
<b>Kindness</b>	<b>Riley Dodd</b>	For sharing her scarf in music
<b>Kindness</b>	<b>Sienna Haylock</b>	For treating others so kindly
<b>Kindness</b>	<b>Hattie, Harper, Winnie, Esmee &amp; Edie</b>	For showing kindness to Lenny when he got stuck on the pirate ship and helping him down safely
<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Stanley Archibald</b>	For working hard on his letter formation
<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Ember Bilton</b>	For trying to hard to master doing up her zip!
<b>Aspiration</b>	<b>Myles Larman</b>	For trying hard in phonics
<b>Aspiration</b>	<b>Jude Martin</b>	For showing aspire in his PE lesson
<b>Aspiration</b>	<b>Leo Shurety</b>	Showing resilience when working in a group he didn't choose .
<b>Aspiration</b>	<b>Florence Eastwood</b>	For always showing her school values.

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



Aspiration

Elliot Villar

For working so hard in English.



Congratulations for completing and moving on to the next House point award:

**BRONZE AWARD:** Harry Pavitt

**SILVER AWARD:** Matilda Doherty-Huggins, Arthur Rodgers, Harper Pridmore.

## 🌟 180 Years Fundraising Update! 🌟

Thank you so much! Our fundraising for the new school hall has officially begun!

**Total Raised So Far: £1,645**

- **£645** from our Crowdfunder
- **£1,000** donation from the Hornead Community



Every pound makes a difference. Let's keep the momentum going!

### Spotlight on the 180 Challenge!

Please encourage your children to join the **180 Challenge** - choose something they can be sponsored to do 180 times!

This could be anything from 180 jumps, 180 drawings, 180 minutes reading or anything creative!

You can use paper sponsorship forms or set up your own Crowdfunder page linked to the school's main page, just like **Flo in Nursery**, who has raised **over £300** by swimming **180 lengths!** Amazing!

### 💡 Got an idea for a bigger fundraising event?

We'd love to hear it! Please get in touch if you have something exciting you would like to do for our hall fundraising efforts.

Link to Crowdfunder below:

[Help Us Build a New Hall for Hornead School - a crowdfunding project in Buntingford by Hornead CofE First School](#)



# Class News

## Forest School



The Hormead Forest has been buzzing with cheerful squeals this week as children made the most of the milder weather and uncovered a whole host of tiny forest residents. Worms, snails, ladybirds and even the odd centipede have all been proudly presented as part of our invertebrate investigations.

Pupils have quickly become enthusiastic leg-counters, spotting creatures with none, six, or what felt like far too many to keep track of. The woodlouse caused particular debate - was it really fourteen legs, or did it just wriggle too fast to count?



Our younger explorers also tried their hand at “worm charming,” gently mimicking the vibrations of rainfall to tempt worms to the surface. Much to their delight, it actually worked. For now, the worm-charming champion is an adult, though judging by this week’s excitement, that title may soon be challenged.



*Luy Eileen*

### Hoglets Class – age 2 and 3 years

What a lovely first week we have had back at Hoglets, the children have loved the start of our topic 'Beep Beep' with this week looking at trains. We have had fun building tracks on the floor and using our imagination with big cardboard boxes, painting, using mega blocks to make our own trains and matching coloured objects to the correct colour trays, like traffic lights.

We have had two great music lessons this week one based on 'Puss in boots going to London' where the children sang and danced along to musical instruments and the second where we looked at ways different musical instruments sound and how we play them. The children are so engaged in these lessons and I hope they come home singing and talking about the different words they have learnt during them.

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



It has been lovely seeing the sun again this week the children have really enjoyed spending so much time outside, let's hope this weather continues next week.

*Mrs Eves, Mrs Plumb, Mrs Moretto*



### Hedgehogs Class – age 3 and 4 years



Each morning in Hedgehogs begins with song, as the children join in with "Days of the Week" and "What's the Weather?" to ease into the day with rhythm and routine. Music continues to be a joyful thread throughout the week. Every Tuesday afternoon we walk over to the hall for our Mini Mozarts session, where the children have the chance to listen to, look at, and feel a variety of instruments. Each lesson is built around a story, and the music helps bring that story to life in a way the children love.

Last term, our music teacher also began visiting on Thursday afternoons for a dedicated communication-through-song session. Through exploring different pitches, tones, and vocal play, the children are building confidence in expressing themselves.

This week, music has been flowing through the classroom too, with the children moving, painting, and crafting to different pieces. In phonics and maths, we sing the same song for the whole week to support learning - this week's phonics song is 'Wind the Bobbin Up.' After our Love of Reading session each day, the children finish with a song of their choice before getting ready for lunch, a moment they look forward to and take great delight in.

*Mrs Stuart, Mrs Larman, Miss Jackson*

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



## Maple Class – SEND



We hope you all had a lovely half term! The children in Maple Class have returned to school full of energy, smiles, and a real curiosity to learn new things. It has been wonderful to see how quickly they have settled back into school routines.

This week, our focus has been on the much-loved story 'Giraffes Can't Dance'. The children have really connected with the book, and it has opened up lots of opportunities for exploring feelings, movement, and communication. Throughout the week, we have been modelling the different emotions the giraffe experiences, using Makaton signs and visual supports to help the children understand and join in. They have responded brilliantly, showing lovely engagement and enthusiasm during each session. It has been especially lovely watching the children attempt to copy the Makaton signs. We couldn't be prouder of their efforts.

In 'Fun with Food' this

week, we linked our learning to Chinese New Year. The children **LOVED** exploring the prawn crackers, rice and noodles. There was so much curiosity, sensory play and lots of happy faces as they tasted, touched and investigated all the different textures. It was a brilliant hands-on experience that everyone enjoyed.

We're so proud of how well Maple Class have started the new half term, and we can't wait for more exciting learning ahead!

*Mrs Lynch, Mrs Dunn and Mrs Wade*



## Cherry Class – Reception



Cherry Class have had a busy start to the half term as we have started our new topic 'Around the World'. This week we have been busy making passports and tickets, making lists for our suitcases, and visiting London and learning about all the famous landmarks there, before we head somewhere new next week on our world adventure! The children have really enjoyed the milder weather and playing in our outdoor area, and we also enjoyed a PE session outdoors where we focused on our teamwork skills when playing games. We are on the hunt for some wooden pallets to add to our outdoor area so if you are able to help with this please let me know!

In our Literacy, the children have started their new books all about what they like to celebrate. The children were excited to share all the things they celebrate in a year. The first page of our books focused on birthdays and the children thought of what they associated with birthdays before writing and drawing their ideas.

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



The children love their weekly Mini Mozart sessions on a Tuesday where they always use a story as inspiration for their learning. This week it was Puss in Boots and there was great excitement as they listened to the story with Mr Geary on the piano for the background music and Emma leading the energetic session of actions to the story.

Cherry Class certainly love to perform! They are always enjoying our class instruments, and microphone! And you may have also spotted a fantastic singing and dancing performance appear on ClassDojo this week too!

*Mrs Guillian, Miss Griffin and Mrs Villar*

## Willow Class – Year 1



Last half term in Music Willow Class explored the pulse of music: the steady heartbeat that runs through every piece. The children have been tapping, clapping, and moving to pulses at different tempos, noticing how a faster tempo creates a quicker pulse. Building on this, we have begun learning about sound patterns, discovering how rhythms are made from long and short sounds.

Our learning is linked to a fairytale theme, and we started by using our voices expressively to retell The Three Little Pigs. The children experimented with dynamics (volume) and pitch, identifying that the wolf's voice is typically loud and low, while the pigs' voices are softer and higher. This has helped them understand how musical

elements can bring characters and stories to life.

Over the coming weeks, Willow Class will be learning how to create different sounds using a single instrument, read simple rhythmic patterns using one-beat sounds and rests, respond thoughtfully to pieces of music and work together to create their own small-group fairytale performances.

The children have embraced the creativity and freedom of music lessons, showing real enthusiasm for learning new musical vocabulary and demonstrating their understanding through demonstrations and discussion. Their confidence and creativity continue to grow every week. Keep up the amazing work Willow class 😊

Thank you for your support in sending the children's toys in with them for our first history lesson, the children had such a great time discussing their favourite toys with their friends and explaining how they like to play with them, where they like to play with them and when they got their toys, in preparation for future lessons this half term.

*Mrs Ward, Miss Ellis and Miss Haywood*

## Birch Class – Year 2

In our music lessons, we have been learning how events, actions and feelings within stories can be represented by pitch (how high or low the notes are), dynamics (the volume) and tempo (the speed of the music).

We enjoyed listening to a range of music, discussing how it made us feel, and what it made us think of or imagine while we listened to it. We listened to the instrumental 'test drive' from How to Train Your Dragon and considered what events could be happening in the film to match the mood of the music, before listening to it again along with the visuals.



**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



Finally, we rewatched the scene without the music, noting that the experience was very different and not nearly as exciting.

We also explored how sound effects can be used to help tell stories and learned about the work of Foley artists - the people who add all the sounds to films and TV by using a range of different objects and techniques.



Using percussion instruments, we explored playing with varied tempo and dynamics. We looked at the stories of Little Red Riding Hood and Jack and the Beanstalk, considering how the characters are feeling at each point and what they are doing. We then decided how we could best represent this with the sounds we made on our instruments. The children worked in groups to rehearse their performances before performing them to the class. At the end of each performance, the audience applauded (we learned that sometimes they might say 'encore', asking for more) and the performers gave a bow.

*Miss Sawyer and Mrs Buckmaster*

## Oak Class – Year 3 & 4



Oak Class have had a wonderfully lively few weeks in Music, with both year groups getting stuck into very different but equally exciting projects. Our Year 3s have now wrapped up their ukulele lessons with Mr Burton, finishing the unit with growing confidence and a real sense of achievement. They worked hard on their chords and



strumming, and it's been brilliant to see how far they've come. With that, the ukuleles have now been passed over to the Year 4s, who have jumped straight in. They've already learned the F, G and G7 chords and have been using them to play their own version of *A Sailor Went to Sea*.

While the Year 4s have been busy strumming away, the Year 3s have been channelling their energy into Maypole dancing. They've begun learning a weaving pattern, concentrating hard on keeping in time and working together. There's a real buzz as they prepare for their May Day performance, and they're already showing lovely teamwork and enthusiasm.

Alongside all this, our dance group has been working incredibly hard on their routine for the upcoming Dance Festival. Their performance brings together an exciting mix of songs, films and characters, all woven into one brilliant dance. We were lucky enough to watch their dress rehearsal on Wednesday, and the whole class absolutely loved it. Their confidence, creativity and commitment really shone through.



*Mr Armes, Miss Wentworth, Mrs Crowe and Miss Standing*

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



## Friends and Parents of Hormead School.

Our next meeting is on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 2:30pm in the school hall. Please come along if you are interested in joining or taking over as our new PTA 😊

We are hoping to start the ball rolling on arrangements for our 'Back in Time' School Fair and would welcome your ideas.

Some upcoming events for your diary!

# JOIN OUR NEW PTA!

## WE NEED YOU!

Our current PTA who have supported our school from the very beginning, will be stepping down at the end of this year. They have done an incredible job, organising events and raising money for things our children love and benefit from.



- + Playground equipment
- + Pantomime visits



Special events and more!

Without a PTA many of these valuable experiences simply wouldn't be possible.

## WHAT DOES THE PTA DO?

- Meets once a half-term (at someone's home, a local pub, or school)
- Includes a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and a friendly group of parents, carers, or grandparents
- Plans fun fundraising events
- Helps bring the school community together
- Makes a real difference to every child in our school





## Brief from the Office:

### Contact

- For all **general** emails and to **report absence**, please email Elaine - [admin@hormead.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hormead.herts.sch.uk)
- For anything to do with **finance, clubs or Arbor**, please email Linda - [office@hormead.herts.sch.uk](mailto:office@hormead.herts.sch.uk)

**PLEASE check Ping regularly.** There are children and parents that are missing out on vital information for trips and events and even Consultation appointments.

Thank you.

## Calendar Dates coming up

**Changes or additions to the calendar dates since the last newsletter are marked in red**

<b>March 2026</b>	
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Y3/4 Dance Festival (5pm) team tbc
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Oak Class Rapid Fire Cricket – Sele School
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Y2 Birch Class Celebration Assembly (9:30am)
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup>	World Book Day – Dress up as a book character.
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup>	2:45pm – Parents stay and read
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Y3 Oak Celebration Assembly (9:30am)
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Reception – Nurse for vision and hearing screening and heights and weights
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Newsletter 13
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mother's Day
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Walk and Wheel to school 2-week Challenge begins
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Y3/4 Bikeability training - Day 1
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Y3/4 Bikeability training - Day 2
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Year 2 Tag Rugby Festival – St Edmunds
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Y4 Oak Celebration Assembly (9:30am)
<b>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Willow Class trip to Toy Museum</b>
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	PTA Colour Run – details to follow
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Newsletter 14
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>10am Easter Service at St Nicholas Church led by Cherry Class</b>
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	School ends at 1pm for Easter Holidays
<b>April 2026</b>	
<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Back to school</b>

**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**