



# 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: 13 25/26

### Dear Families,

The last couple of weeks have absolutely flown by as we have navigated a wave of staff absences, with many bravely battling the usual seasonal colds and bugs. Through it all, the children have, as ever, shown such resilience. They have also been thoroughly enjoying the brighter, drier and windier days – especially the chance to get back out onto the field for a good run around!



Last week's World Book Day was a real highlight. The children were so excited to arrive dressed as their favourite book characters, and it was wonderful to see such creativity on display. As always, our teachers planned some fantastic activities for the day, and you will be able to read more about these in the class news. It was also lovely to see so many children taking part in the competitions on Class Dojo. Choosing an overall winner was incredibly difficult! The photos of children reading in unusual places were particularly entertaining - from reading upside down to reading on the toilet, they certainly made us smile.

Reading continues to be a huge focus across the school, as we know it opens the door to every area of the curriculum. Across the school, every class now has three structured group reading sessions each week. The books used are closely matched to each child's reading level, helping them to encounter new vocabulary while developing fluency, expression and confidence when reading aloud.

One thing we have noticed recently, however, is that home reading seems to be happening less frequently than it has in the past. We know how busy family life can be, but those few minutes of reading at home really do make a huge difference. We have recently refreshed many of our home reading books with exciting new titles, and we hope the children will enjoy working their way through the scheme with your continued support.

On a slightly different note, while hunting through historic documents for our upcoming "Back in Time" day, I was delighted to discover a box of old 8mm cine film reels. My husband kindly treated me to a vintage cine projector from eBay, and I have spent the last few weekends watching what is on them. They have been an absolute delight – capturing moments from the school between 1971 and 1983 and showing the same wonderful ethos and sense of fun that still makes Hormead such a special place today.

The sports days in particular were fascinating to watch, although it has been hard not to view them with my health and safety hat firmly on! Wheelbarrow races, piggy-back races and teachers crawling through tunnels of hay all featured prominently. I am now trying to find a way to share some of these clips with the wider community, as they really are a joy to watch.

Finally, we are very excited that the children will be putting on a special performance as part of our 180th birthday celebrations. Please do keep **Tuesday 28th April at 2pm** free in your diaries — more details will follow soon.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Wishing all the wonderful mummy's a very special Mother's Day on Sunday.

*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	Izzy Green	Always aiming high during play and learning
Hedgehogs	Nate Kelly	For showing such an improvement in phonics
Cherry	Jesse Webb	For making more green choices and trying hard
Cherry	Nazar Kozub	For enthusiasm for all his learning and trying so hard!
Willow Y1	Harry Pavitt	For showing confidence with measuring height and length in maths
Willow Y1	Amelia Bates	For showing resilience and determination in her writing
Birch Y2	George Berger	For a positive approach to all his learning & showing kindness in groups
Birch Y2	Jude Rogers	For improved focus and speed during learning activities
Oak Y3	Thalia Jechorek	For showing resilience and not giving up in maths
Oak Y3	Dawid Kusion	For trying to write in greater detail in English
Oak Y4	George Graham	For showing a particularly keen interest in his geography learning about maps
Oak Y4	Sienna Sandford	For using her geography learning to help write her story

### Values Hearts



Love	Elliot Villar	For helping Matilda tidy her lunch away when she got hurt
Cooperation	Louie and Daphne in Y1	For amazing conversation skills – listening carefully
Courage	Archie Brazza	For having more confidence to speak to adults, ask questions and crack jokes!
Courage	Elliot, Matilda, Eva in Y1	For showing courage in class assembly
Courage	Lucy Parkyn	For showing bravery when using PE equipment
Courage	Jude Bates	For coming into school on his own
Kindness	Adeline Duke	For making sure a friend was okay when she fell over at lunchtime
Kindness	George Berger	For helping others when they need it
Kindness	Albie Mulberry Laurie	For helping Harry to tie his shoe lace, which he chose to do it himself
Resilience	Beau Burrowes	For trying hard with all aspects of his learning
Aspiration	George Hayden	For using lovely manners
Aspiration	Charlie Munday	For his effort in creative activities
Aspiration	Ember Bilton	For always showing her values
Aspiration	Elliot Villar	For working so hard in English.

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



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

**BRONZE AWARD:** Arthur Frearson

**SILVER AWARD:** Eva Jechorek

## 180 Years Fundraising News

Thank you so much!

Link to Crowdfunder below:

### Total Raised So Far: **£1,760**

- ✓ **£760** from our Crowdfunder
- ✓ **£1,000** donation from the Hormead Community

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



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

### Spotlight on the 180 Challenge!

Thank you to all the children who are joining in the **180 Challenge**

Our current fundraising champions are:

- *Thalia and Eva Jechorek raising £67.95 by selling sweets from Poland in school*
- *Flo has raised £370 so far in her challenge of swimming 180 lengths*
- *Ember has raised £50 so far by drawing 180 pictures of people*
- *Carter Carlson is collecting 180 eggs to sell – watch this space!*
- *Leo Darmody is walking to school 180 times to raise money – watch this space!*
- *Arthur Frearson is planting and selling 180 sunflowers – watch this space!*
- *Julia Zolti is currently selling handmade necklaces in school – watch this space!*

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



## Sporting News

### Year 3 and 4 attend Rapid Fire Cricket



The year 3's and 4's attended a whole morning of rapid fire cricket at Simon Balle School and had an amazing time learning the skills and competing against other schools.

Mason - We went to Simon Balle to play Rapid fire cricket. It was fun because we got to play multiple games against other schools and it didn't matter if you lost or didn't run because it was a fun game.

Millie - I enjoyed doing the fielding more than the batting because it was fun trying to be as quick as possible.

Theo - It was fun batting because you could keep on hitting the balls as far as you could and then run as fast as you can. Fielding was harder because you had to run more and go back to where you were.

Riley - I enjoyed batting the balls and running as fast as I could between the cones. We won against another team 81-72 and another score was 98-64.

## Class News

### Forest School



What a treat to be able to share a story in a special outdoor place. Some parents from Willow Class joined their children on World Book day in the Hormead Forest.

For a few minutes all that could be heard were happy murmurings and quiet chuckles as pages were turned. Usually during Forest

School, we need to be careful of getting pages damp or covered in mud. Often reading is for meaning - explanations of activities or short descriptions. Recently these short, focussed readings have been about invertebrates.



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



Did you know woodlice aren't insects? They're crustaceans, closely related to crabs and shrimps, and amazingly, they have blue blood. Reading certainly unlocks great discoveries, and nature has a wonderful way of sparking our imaginations.

Who knows—maybe next year's favourite World Book Day character will be William, the Wonderful Woodlouse. Anyone ready to draft what might become the next popular children's story?

*Ivy Eileen*



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



## Hoglets Class – age 2 and 3 years



In Hoglets, we love reading, helping spark imagination, language, confidence, and curiosity. Each week, we choose a Book of the Week linked to our current theme, giving the children plenty of opportunities to explore stories through play, drama, and hands-on experiences. This week, our story has been Room on the Broom. The children have thrown themselves into the magic of this tale! Using our story sack, they have enjoyed, acting out the story alongside the book, dressing up as the witch, using props and characters to bring each scene to life, joining in with repeated phrases as the story is read. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they retell the story in their own words. Last week's book was the fun and rhyming Duck in the Truck. This repetitive story encouraged the children to join in, anticipate key phrases, and shout out missing words. Rhyming books like this help develop early phonics skills in a playful and memorable way. Throughout our environment, books are available in every area—from construction to role play, outdoors, and creative spaces. This encourages children to pick up a story independently, share a book with a friend, or enjoy reading with an adult.

Last week, we also celebrated World Book Day, and what a fantastic day it was! The children arrived full of excitement, proudly dressed as their favourite storybook characters. We enjoyed a variety of book-themed activities, including, exploring animal stories with Dear Zoo, learning about life on the farm with A Day on the Farm, revisiting the magic of Room on the Broom through play and craft. It was a joy to see how enthusiastic the children were as they shared their costumes and stories with one another.

This week, the children have also been thrilled with our theme of "Flying." We set up Hoglets Airport, complete with tickets, seats, a check-in desk, and imaginative destinations. The children loved taking turns as pilots, passengers, and cabin crew, going on exciting pretend journeys, using their imagination to role play airport adventures.

*Mrs Eves, Mrs Plumb, Mrs Maretta*

## Hedgehogs Class – age 3 and 4 years

In Hedgehogs, reading is woven into our everyday routine and learning. We enjoy stories twice a day, before lunch and before home time which helps the children relax, listen carefully and grow familiar with the rhythm of storytelling. Each week we explore a Book of the Week linked to our theme, this week we have read 'The Train Ride.' Revisiting the same story gives the children valuable repetition, helping them learn new language, join in with key phrases, and even predict what might come next.

Every morning we dive into our phonics lesson and the children have adapted brilliantly. They can now clap out syllables, spot alliteration, identify rhyming words, and find the odd one out. They love experimenting with voice sounds, they have learned to read the word 'up' and have even begun exploring compound words. They really are superstar learners.



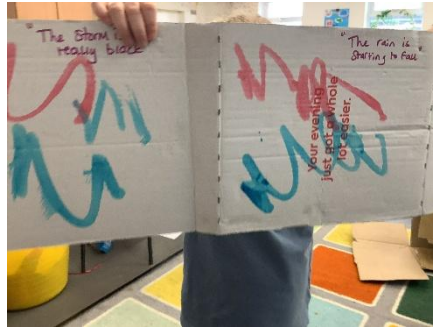
**Love of Learning, Love of Life itself and Love of God**



Our environment is designed to nurture early reading skills. In our literacy area, we have a basket of classic children's books alongside a bookcase filled with stories linked to our topic, this term its all about transport. In our reading corner, the children can also explore a traditional tale each week using puppets to retell the story in their own words. This week, they have loved retelling The Very Hungry Caterpillar with great imagination.



Everything we do lays the essential building blocks for confident, joyful early readers.



*Mrs Stuart, Mrs Larman, Miss Jackson*

### Maple Class – SEND



Maple Class have had a wonderful couple of weeks, filled with stories, sunshine, and plenty of brave exploring. One of the biggest highlights was diving into the much-loved tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The children were completely captivated, especially on World Book Day when the Maple Class staff surprised everyone by dressing up as the three bears. There were lots of smiles, giggles, and curious looks as the children recognised the familiar characters right in their own classroom.

As the weather has started to warm up, we have been making the most of the chance to spend more time outdoors. We're very lucky to have access to our fantastic outside classroom, which has quickly become a favourite spot. Whether it's sharing a story in the fresh air or simply enjoying the space to explore, the children have really thrived with the extra outdoor time.

In Fun with Food, Maple Class have been showing great courage as we begin to explore foods that are a little more adventurous. This week's challenge was celery. Every child tasted it at least once, and they all used their senses to

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



explore its smell, texture, and crunch. It was lovely to see them approach something new with such enthusiasm and curiosity.

Well done Maple class!

*Mrs Lynch, Mrs Dunn and Mrs Wade*

## Cherry Class – Reception



Cherry Class have had a busy fortnight and are enjoying our around the world topic. Last week, we visited China, using 'The Dragon Painter' as our core text. The children enjoyed learning about Chinese culture, trying Chinese food and making their own lanterns. This week, we have been visiting France, using 'A Walk In Paris' as our core text. The children have been learning about famous buildings in France, trying French food, and working in our bakery making some delicious croissants and pain au chocolat! The children also created some beautiful collage flags and Eiffel Tower artwork.

In Phonics, the children have been continuing to embed their phase 3 sounds by applying them to reading and writing longer words.



Each week, the children do three guided reading sessions using a book closely matched to their reading level. Each session focuses on a different skill: fluency, prosody and comprehension. The children also love our end of the day story time - their particular favourites at the moment are any of the Julia Donaldson stories.

It was lovely to see all of the amazing dressing up for World Book Day. The children loved talking about what their costume was and seeing their friends' outfits too. We thought about different careers and the children decided what they want to be when they grow up, and what these jobs might entail. It was lovely to have so many parents join us for stay and read too.

Thank you for your continued support with home reading. It has been great to see the children reading so much at home, and we hope to keep their motivation and love of reading as we move into the summer term soon. A reminder that our book

change days are Monday and Thursday, so please ensure books are in school on these days.

*Mrs Guillian, Miss Griffin and Mrs Villar*

## Willow Class – Year 1

What an amazing World Book Day we had last week! The children looked absolutely wonderful in their costumes. Some arrived as much-loved storybook characters, while others surprised us with creations inspired by information texts.

In class, we had great fun exploring characters from our class story 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.' We discussed their qualities and imagined which real-world jobs might suit them best. There were lots of giggles as we pictured Augustus Gloop as a baker or food taster, and Mike Teavee working as a programmer or film critic. The children then reflected on which character they felt most similar to and why. Unsurprisingly, we had a high number of Mike Teavees and Augustus Gloops apparently watching TV and enjoying chocolate are very popular hobbies in Willow Class!

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



Thank you for your fantastic support with our World Book Day competitions. We received incredible entries, including videos summarising favourite stories, creative reading in unusual-places photos, and beautiful artwork inspired by books. A special well done to Poppy for her wonderful caterpillar cupcakes, which she kindly brought in to share with the class!

Reading is one of our favourite class activities, and the children look forward to our weekly practice sessions with an adult. Each session follows a familiar structure: on Mondays they showcase their phonics and blending skills, on Tuesdays the children build expression and intonation, and on Fridays they demonstrate their understanding through comprehension questions and by linking the story to their own experiences.

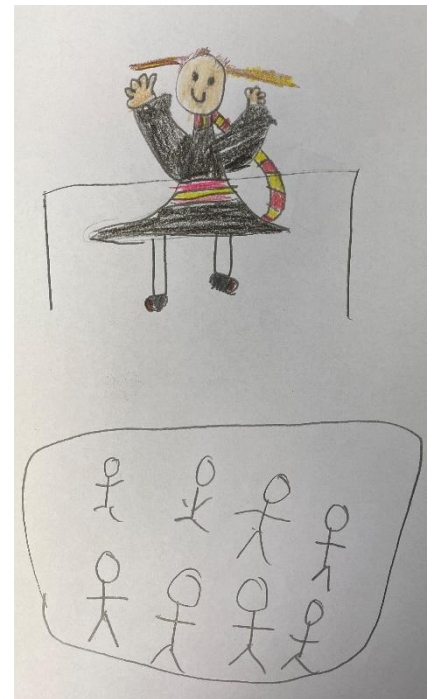
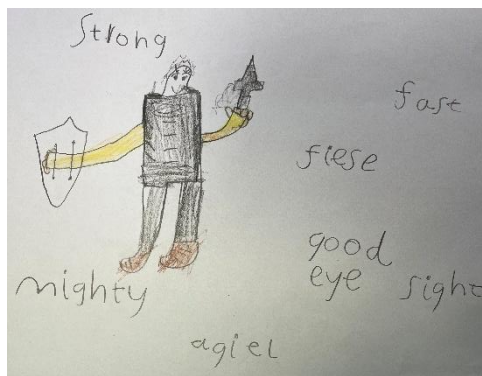


**Reminder:**

Next Thursday is our trip to the Toy Museum in Stansted Mountfitchet. Please ensure children wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a packed lunch and water bottle in a named disposable bag, as all rubbish must be thrown away.

*Mrs Ward, Miss Ellis and Miss Haywood*

**Birch Class – Year 2**



We had a great range of characters in Birch class on World Book Day! We each thought about the characters we came dressed as, or a character we knew really well, and what their qualities and skills are. For example, some are brave, kind, clever, good friends, good at doing the splits, enjoy building machines, or great at counting. We then considered the question 'if my character had a job in the real world, what would they be good at?'. Bearing their personalities and skills in mind, children then gave their characters jobs and explained their choices - Pikachu would make a great electrician, Hermione could become a teacher, and the mouse from The Gruffalo could have a future career as a police officer.



In our English unit we have been looking at poetry, with a particular focus on simile poems. The children rehearsed and performed a range of different poems, developing their expression and reading for effect. We wrote similes about school, special people, and used positive and negative similes to describe objects in different ways. In English units that focus on narratives, the children have the opportunity to share their stories with each other and practice using their storyteller voices. We love diving deeper into the stories we read and finding out about the characters, exploring the writing choices the author has made and how we could make similar choices in our own writing. Next, we will be creating stories about a dream inspired by our favourite foods, I'm sure they'll make everyone hungry after reading them!

Here is a poem about Hornead school that some of the children wrote together as a group and performed clearly and with confidence in our class assembly:

Come to our school and you will find...

Bibles as precious as a diamond.

Boards hard like steel.

Trees as big as buildings.

Climbing frames as solid as the school.

A library quiet like a baby sleeping.

Rubbers as squishy as marshmallows.

Desks hard like stone.

*Miss Sawyer and Mrs Buckmaster*

## Oak Class – Year 3 & 4

This half term has been full of imagination, creativity, and plenty of reading. Our main English focus has been the enchanting story *Leon and the Place Between*. The children have loved exploring Leon's magical journey and using the book to inspire their own writing. They've been working hard on creating their very own "magical place" stories, thinking carefully about setting, atmosphere, and descriptive language. Their ideas have been wonderfully inventive, and it's been brilliant to see their confidence as writers grow.

Alongside this, we've continued our regular reading practice sessions, where the children have been building fluency, expression, and a deeper understanding of the books they're reading. It's been lovely to see how much progress they're making.



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



World Book Day 2026 was a real highlight. The classroom was full of excitement as everyone arrived dressed as their favourite book characters. In the afternoon, we had great fun stepping into the shoes of the “World’s Worst Children”. The class spent time imagining the mischief they would get up to both at home and at school, and their writing was full of humour and creativity.

To finish the day, a few parents joined us to read with their children, or small groups, outside in the sunshine. It was a calm, joyful way to end a busy day of celebrating stories.

It’s been a fantastic half term, and we’re excited for even more reading adventures ahead.

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

## 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)

### Payments

Please check Ping for outstanding payments for Oak Dance Festival photos, Oak Bikeability, Willow Toy Museum Trip and the Year 4 residential to Overstrand.

Please make sure your Arbor accounts are all cleared as we are at the end of the Financial Year

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 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**



**Friends and Parents of Hormead School.**

Next weekend the PTA are hosting their Colour Run. If you have never taken part before, it really is great fun for the whole family. Whether you choose to walk or run, the main thing is to come prepared to get colourful and messy!