



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: 14 25/26

Dear Families,

As we reach the end of term, I'm not quite sure whether it's the blustery weather stirring things up or a classic case of end-of-term-itis, but either way, it's fair to say the children are more than ready for the Easter holidays!

It has been something of a bittersweet week, with a number of changes in the air. We were delighted to welcome Edward into Year 3. Having recently returned from Dubai with his family while things settle, he has made a lovely start. We hope his family will be able to return to Dubai after Easter.

At the same time, we said goodbye to Elsie-May in Maple Class, who is moving on to her specialist school. Elsie-May has been part of our school since Nursery and has left a lasting impression on us with her wonderfully larger-than-life personality. We wish her every happiness and success as she moves on to a setting that can fully support her needs.

We also said farewell to Miss Moretto, who, although only with us for a short time as a Teaching Assistant, has made a significant impact. Having first joined us as part of our cleaning team, she has played a huge role in keeping our school looking its best and keeping us all on our toes! We thank her sincerely for her hard work and wish her all the very best in her new role at another school.

Sadly, we also received news that Michael Johnson, our Chair of Governors has lost his beloved wife, Annie. I attended the funeral yesterday, where hundreds of members of the community gathered to pay their respects to such a remarkable woman. While recently looking through photographs for our 180-year celebration, I came across a lovely picture of Michael and Annie in 1989, bringing their Seagram Grand National winning horse, into school - a moment of great pride and joy shared with the children. Hearing more about Annie's life, it has been touching to know that our school was a small part of her story. We send our heartfelt condolences to Michael, Lizzie, and all the family as they remember and celebrate her life.



To the Staff of Great Hormead School with love and thanks from Annie and Mike Johnson
Newnham 10th in the 1989 Seagram Grand National

As Easter approaches, we have been taking time to reflect with the children on the Easter story they know so well and why it holds such a special place in the Christian calendar. Cherry Class treated us to the most wonderful performance today at St Nicholas Church. We are incredibly proud of each and every child - their confidence, clear voices, and thoughtful presentation shone through beautifully in front of the audience.



I hope you are all able to enjoy some relaxing, special time together over the Easter break. I will be heading off on an adventure back to Zimbabwe, where I was born and grew up. It promises to be a very special trip - travelling through the bush in 4x4s, but most importantly, spending precious time with my brother and family. I feel incredibly fortunate to be sharing this experience with my four children and their partners as we make new memories together. I will be off the radar for a couple of weeks, but I wish you all a safe, restful, and happy Easter whatever you may be doing.

Mrs Cowler Headteacher

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Reasons to Celebrate

Class Stars of the Week



You make us so proud!

Hedgehogs	Jacob Stanning	For showing resilience for staying a longer day.
Cherry	Hermione Hagley	Fantastic effort in her writing and working so hard.
Willow Y1	George Apostolos	For excellent behaviour and enthusiasm completing the toy museum trail.
Birch Y2	Harper Pridmore	For taking the time to check her sentences make before moving on in her writing.
Oak Y3	Julia Zolti	For trying hard to think creatively in her English writing
Oak Y4	Harper Munday	For being helpful and encouraging with the year 3's during maypole practise.

Values Hearts



Cooperation	Alfie, Arthur, Albert, Ernie, Jackson, Elliot, Spencer	For brilliant teamwork and communication at the Tag Rugby Festival
Courage	Arthur Rodgers	For being super brave when he collided with another child at Rugby
Courage	Amelia, Wojciech, Harry & Joe	For singing a solo!
Kindness	George Graham	For being a good friend to Archie
Aspiration	Tommy Sandford	Trying hard in all his areas of learning
Aspiration	Birch Class	For aiming high in rugby and trying their best
Aspiration	Elliott Villar	For working so hard in English
Aspiration	Fred, Yarchyk, Brooke, Mason, Geoge, Millie, Theo, Penny, Esmae, Dawid, Leo S	For choosing to write the whole story in RE



Congratulations to **WIND** house the winners of the Easter Cup!



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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!

Total Raised So Far: £1,968.13

- ✓ **£968.13** from our Crowdfunder
- ✓ **£1,000** donation from the Hormead Community

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

If you have given money directly to the school bank please let us know your child's Name in the reference – we have a couple of donations that we are not sure who they belong to. 😊



Link to Crowdfunder below:

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

Please note – there is a slider that asks you to donate a portion of money to crowdfunder. You DON'T need to do this.

Spotlight on the 180 Challenge!

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

EVERY child taking part in the 180 challenges will receive a special gift from Hormead as a thank you

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!*

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Hormead School 1846–2026 - Celebrating 180 Years!

We are very excited to share some of the wonderful activities planned for our Back in Time Week as part of our 180th anniversary celebrations!



Songs from Oliver Twist – Tuesday 28th April, 2:00pm, Village Hall

The children have been working incredibly hard learning songs from Oliver Twist—a perfect choice to mark our 180-year milestone!

We would be delighted if you could join us for their performance at the Village Hall. Please keep the date free and come along to support the children.

Costumes:

For the performance, we would love children to have a Victorian-style outfit. We can help with some ideas for this which you may already have in your cupboards.

Back in Time Day – Thursday 30th April

On Thursday, the children are invited to come to school dressed in their Victorian clothing for a full day of fun, themed learning.

We will also be heading to the Meads to watch the children perform a traditional **maypole dance at 10am**. Families are warmly invited to come and watch this special moment!

School History Display – Thursday 30th April, from 1:30pm

From 1:30pm on the same afternoon, we will be opening up the school hall for families to explore a selection of old diaries, documents, and memorabilia we have uncovered from Hormead's long and fascinating history.

We hope you'll enjoy taking a step back in time with us.



We have had so many wonderful things to celebrate this term, including our fantastic school cook, who continues to make our school meals truly enjoyable. The children especially loved their homemade Easter cookies!

Our Breakfast Club is also going from strength to strength. Please do make use of it whenever you need to. It opens at 7:45am (and often a little earlier, once Mrs Prior has finished setting up). The children can choose from a variety of breakfast options and enjoy fun games

and colouring activities.

We kindly ask that you book via Arbor so we know how many children to cater for each morning.

Please remember to always keep your Arbor account in credit to allow you to book ad hoc clubs.



Sporting News

Year 2 attend Tag Rugby Festival



Last Tuesday Birch class did an amazing job of representing the school at the Tag Rugby Festival. Children were reminded of the rules and skills needed for tag rugby and did a range of warm-up activities before playing matches against teams from other schools. All three teams tried their best and got into the spirit of the competition, squelching through the mud and working together to score.

One of our teams displayed particularly brilliant teamwork and communication, constantly tagging other teams and slipping past their defences to score a try. Alfie, Arthur, Albert, Ernie, Jackson, Elliott and Spencer made it all the way to the finals as one of the two highest scoring teams. This final match was incredibly close - it was a draw when the

final whistle blew. The winning team was decided by whoever scored the next point, which was the other team, so they came an amazing second place overall.

Well done to all of Birch class for showing resilience and for joining in with all the games. We are very proud.

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Bikeability – Level 1



At Hormead, when the children are in year 3, we give them the opportunity do their level 1 Bikeability Award. The award teaches children how to safely check their bicycles before they ride and teaches them how to ride safely. This will allow them to go on to higher levels where they learn to ride their bikes on the road.

Comments from some of the children:

We learned about how to use our brakes. We had to do an ABCD check to make sure our bikes were safe. A stands for air in tyres, B is brakes, C is chain and D is direction and appropriate dressing! I loved the cone activity. Penny

We got to ride our bikes around the playground, and I enjoyed the challenge of trying to get our wheels between smaller and smaller gaps in the cones. It was fun. Archie

We learned that we should not put the chain side of our bikes on the floor. Joe

Class News

Forest School



There have been so many fascinating invertebrates to discover at Hormead recently. Over the past few weeks, we've all found our favourites — whether that's millipedes, centipedes, woodlice or earwigs. Every Forest School session has taken children deeper into the world of minibeasts.

Oak Class took part in some real citizen science, surveying invertebrates around the field. Their findings will be sent to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), who are investigating links between soil invertebrates and local bird populations. Birch Class also carried out a habitat survey, tallying the plants and animals found within a hoop-sized space and comparing what they discovered in the field with the forest. Do you think they found more invertebrates out on the field or tucked away in the forest?

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Last week some groups enjoyed cooking their own bread over the fire in the Forest and enjoying it with either sausage, cheese or sugar and cinnamon. A tasty treat which I think when eaten outside in the sunshine, with the smell of wood smoke lingering, tastes even better. "The best bread ever!" was a comment heard several times. We have some frogspawn in a tub in the forest. We're not sure if they will grow and hatch into tadpoles, but we will keep an eye on their development after the Easter holiday.

We've also created space during Forest School to celebrate spring and Easter. Hedgehogs and Cherry Class enjoyed an Easter egg hunt and proudly decorated their own Easter bonnets. After such a busy term, I think we're all ready for a well-earned rest — and perhaps a little chocolate too.



Suy Eileen

Hoglets Class – age 2 and 3 years



Over the last fortnight, Hoglets have been busy continuing our exciting "Beep Beep!" theme, with a special focus on cars and buses. Last week, the children took part in a fantastic tuff tray balance experiment. Using tape to create roads at different heights and angles, we tested whether our toy cars could balance as they travelled across them. The children showed brilliant concentration and problem-solving skills as they experimented with what worked, what didn't, and why! We also explored the world of magnets, discovering

which objects are magnetic and which are not. The children loved predicting outcomes, testing their ideas, and learning more about how magnets work through play. This week, our theme of buses has been in full swing. The children have enjoyed diving into our London



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Town small world, learning about double-deckers, different types of transport, and all the ways we travel from one place to another.

We have had such a wonderful Spring term together, full of curiosity, creativity, and lots of Beep Beep fun! We cannot wait to welcome everyone back for the Summer term, hopefully with some warmer weather to enjoy. Wishing all our Hoglets families a lovely Easter break.

Mrs Eves, Mrs Plumb, Mrs Maretta

Hedgehogs Class – age 3 and 4 years



This term in Hedgehogs, the children have been exploring a wonderful range of science activities, sparking curiosity and plenty of excitement along the way. They have begun to learn about the science behind photosynthesis, discovering how plants use sunlight to make their own food. We also explored freezing and melting by choosing different objects, pouring water over them, and placing them in the freezer. The children were amazed to see their items frozen solid the next day, and they loved watching the ice slowly melt throughout the day.

In our room, the children have been captivated by the magic of cornflour play. They've experimented with its unusual texture—firm when pressed, then suddenly runny when released—using their hands, trucks, and tools to make marks and patterns. Colour mixing has also been a big favourite during child-initiated play, with the children discovering how new colours appear when two are combined.

We have introduced life cycles too, including the fascinating word metamorphosis, which the children have enjoyed learning about. After Easter, we will be revisiting this as we begin our new topic, "Let's Grow."

We hope you all have a lovely Easter break and look forward to welcoming the children back for more fun learning.

Mrs Stuart, Mrs Larman, Miss Jackson

Maple Class – SEND



What a fun-filled couple of weeks we've had in Maple Class! As spring begins to show its face, the children have been absolutely loving the chance to spend more time outdoors. Whether it's exploring the playground, investigating the textures and sounds of nature, or simply enjoying the fresh air, it's been wonderful to see their confidence and curiosity grow each day.

This week has been especially exciting as we've dived into lots of Easter-themed activities. The classroom has been bursting with bright colours, sparkly resources, and—of course—a little bit of cheeky chocolate! One of the biggest highlights was making chocolate rice crispie cakes. The children threw themselves into the experience, pouring, mixing, and spooning the gooey mixture into cupcake cases with the biggest smiles. It was a joy to watch their enthusiasm and pride as they created their own tasty treats.

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Alongside the chocolatey fun, the children have been busy with sensory Easter crafts, egg-themed exploration, and lots of opportunities to practise their communication and independence skills. Maple Class continues to amaze us with their engagement, energy, and love of learning.

Yesterday was a day for us to celebrate Elsie-May as she leaves us to start her exciting new adventure at her specialist school. To celebrate Elsie-May's new adventure, we spent yesterday afternoon bouncing around on a unicorn bouncy castle! The children loved it and we loved seeing all of their smiley faces! We will miss Elsie-May but we wish her the best of luck in her new school and we can't wait to hear about her new journey!

We hope you all have a lovely Easter holiday, filled with rest, fun, and maybe even a few treats of your own. Fingers crossed for lots of sunshine so the children can keep enjoying the great outdoors when they return!

Happy Easter from all of us in Maple Class!

Mrs Lynch, Mrs Dunn and Mrs Wade

Cherry Class – Reception



Cherry Class have had a busy end to our Around The World topic as we have visited Africa and Iceland. The children enjoyed creating beautiful sunset artwork, as well as a visit from Mrs Cowler where they were able to ask questions about her time living in Africa. We have been working hard on our current writing unit where we have been creating books about things that we like to celebrate. To finish their books, the children chose what they would like to do at their own planned celebration – they had lots of creative ideas such as chocolate fountains and motorbike rides!

In our busy learning, the children have been enjoying the milder weather and exploring our outdoor area. They have been particularly keen on looking for bugs and we built our own class bug hotel where the children helped to collect natural resources that the bugs might like. They have also been enjoying making potions in the mud kitchen and adding fresh herbs to these such as mint and rosemary, giving us a great opportunity to explore how these plants grow and what they need to grow well.

Cherry Class have also worked incredibly hard on preparing for their Easter service. We are so proud of each and every one of them for learning their lines off by heart, as well as three songs. We think you will agree that they have done amazing today and put on a fantastic service for the school.

Next half term, we will move on to our next topic where we will be exploring the human body.

Mrs Guillian, Miss Griffin and Mrs Villar

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Willow Class – Year 1



Science continues to be a much-loved subject in Willow Class, with the children always eager for their new learning, especially when it involves hands-on exploration. Last half term, we focused on our bodies and the five senses. The children showed confidence in naming body parts and sharing what they already knew. We then built on this by linking each sense to the correct body part and exploring plenty of new vocabulary. A favourite moment was discovering that it's our skin, not our hands that allows us to feel.

This half term, our learning moved on to animals. We have been naming, comparing, and grouping animals, while using fantastic new vocabulary such as amphibian, reptile, omnivore, herbivore, and carnivore. We also explored what makes a bird a bird, and

the children were amazed to learn that all birds have wings, but not all can fly. A surprising fact for our enthusiastic animal lovers.

After the Easter break, we will begin our new topic: plants. If the weather is kind over the holidays, planting seeds and talking about what plants need to grow or looking closely at flowering plants would be a lovely way to support your child's learning at home.

A quick reminder that our Spelling Bee will take place on the first day back. The test will include 10 spellings the children have already been practising this year.

We are incredibly proud of Willow Class and their fantastic scientific learning! We hope you have a wonderful and restful Easter break.

Mrs Ward, Miss Ellis and Miss Haywood

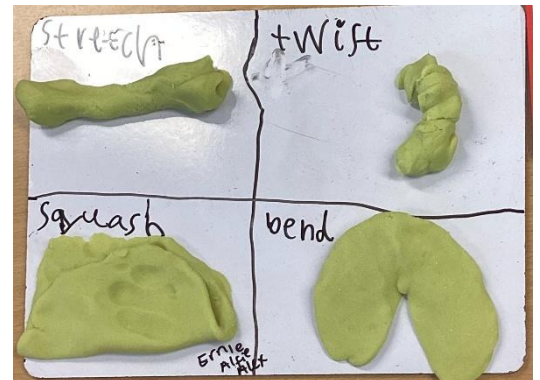


Birch Class – Year 2



As scientists this term, Birch class began by exploring the materials that everyday objects are made from and thinking carefully about why certain materials are suitable (or unsuitable) for different purposes.

Using our grouping and sorting strategies, we investigated objects made from different materials and with different uses and began to think about the properties - such as hardness, softness, transparency, and whether something is waterproof - that make a material a good choice. One of the highlights of the topic was becoming "material inspectors". Equipped with clipboards, the



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children toured the school to identify the materials used around the building and consider why they had been chosen and if they were fit for purpose.

We then explored how solid objects can change shape. Through stretching, twisting, bending, and squashing a range of materials, the children observed which objects changed shape (flexible materials) and which returned to their original shape (elastic materials). We also collected and recorded data throughout the topic, including measuring how far different materials could stretch and testing the strength of paper bridges. The children were fascinated to discover that simply folding paper into a zigzag made their bridges significantly stronger, showing us that shape can affect the strength of a material.



This half-term, our focus has shifted to animal life cycles and health. We studied how animals grow and change over time, noticing that some young animals look very different from the adults - for example, tadpoles compared with frogs. We also carried out an investigation to answer the question: "Are children the same height in every year group?". The children measured pupils of different ages and looked for patterns in the data. After comparing all their heights we had evidence to support the idea that as children get older, they get taller.



Finally, we learned about what animals, including humans, need to stay alive and healthy including the basic needs - food, water, and oxygen. The children loved using foam (aka 'germs') to show how easily germs can spread if we do not wash our hands properly. We discussed good personal hygiene, why exercise is important, and the food groups that help us maintain a healthy, balanced diet.

Miss Sawyer and Mrs Buckmaster

Oak Class – Year 3 & 4



This half term, Oak Class have been busy exploring the noisy, wiggly, wonderful world of Sound and Vibration! The children have absolutely loved getting hands-on, making plenty of discoveries (and plenty of noise!) along the way.

We began by investigating what causes sound in the first place. The children explored a range of instruments to see which parts vibrate when they make a sound. They were brilliant at spotting the different types of movement: shaking, striking, plucking and tapping. We talked about how all sound starts with something vibrating, even if we can't always see it.



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Next, we learned that vibrations travel through the air as sound waves. To put this idea into action, we made our own cup-and-string telephones. The children were amazed that their voices could travel along the string as vibrations.

After that, we explored volume and what makes sounds louder or quieter. The class experimented with ways to create stronger vibrations. For example, hitting a drum harder or shaking a maraca with more energy. They discovered that bigger vibrations make louder sounds, while gentle vibrations create quieter ones.

To finish our topic, we looked at the relationship between volume and distance. Working in groups, the children made sounds while moving closer or further away from each other. They found that sounds become quieter as you move away, because the vibrations spread out as they travel.

It's been a fantastic half term of practical learning; Oak Class should be very proud of the scientific thinking they've shown. We're looking forward to even more exciting discoveries next term!

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
- For anything to do with **finance, clubs or Arbor**, please email Linda - office@hormead.herts.sch.uk

Payments

Please ensure that you check **Ping regularly**, we aren't always able to follow up with individual parents that have not responded to trips and forms so **your child may miss out on something**.

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

April 2026

Monday 13th

Back to school

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Friends and Parents of Hormead School.

BONKERS BOTTOMLESS

B I N G O

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