

# Newsletter



## Clubs

### Monday

Recorder and sports teams club

### Tuesday

Colouring all year groups

### Wednesday

Geography fieldwork club from Year 1

### Thursday

Yoga/Athletics all years

### Friday

Brass band club



## Historical figures Oracy Competition Finals

We were delighted to take three children to the cluster final of the Historical Figures Oracy competition at Meysey Hampton Primary School. Amy, Fraser and Arno spoke passionately about Robert II, Nancy Mitford and Katherine Parr. The event was judged by Jessica Yarrow (Producer of the Cirencester History Festival), Dave Musgrove (Presenter of BBC History podcast, content director of HistoryExtra.com and magazines BBC History Magazine and BBC History Revealed) and Michael Gorely (Local Heritage Education Officer for Historic England's Heritage Schools Programme).

## Swimming Gala

Children in Class 3 competed brilliantly in the small schools swimming gala on April 2nd. We reached the final in over half of the events which is a record for us. Children's ability to swim is such an important life skill as we live within the Cotswold Water Park and it is why we make the commitment to take every child in the school swimming for a term each year.



## Netball

Last term some of the year 5 and 6 pupils attended several netball sessions hosted by Kingshill School, who kindly let us use their netball courts. The children were joined by pupils from other local schools such as Ampney Crucis and Southrop to practice their ball skills. We began each session with a small warmup and some shooting practice before eventually progressing into some full match-play. The children had a great time trying out different positions and learning about the rules of the game. We look forward to some more netball events in the coming terms.



## DeVere Trip

Class 3 spent a wonderful, sunny day undertaking ecology fieldwork at the Cotswold DeVere Hotel. We started the day with a walk around the lake, looking at the different plant life on the banks and in the woodland. The children then used quadrats, kindly lent to us by the Royal Agricultural



University, to sample the diversity of plant life in the hotel grounds. They used plant identification keys to work out what the plants were and undertook counts to understand the distribution of different plants. They then drew sketch maps with symbols of the area. Of course, there was time for a play in the playground area and some wonderful cookies from the head chef!



## Puddle Ducks Water safety

This month we were joined by Puddle Ducks from South Cerney who came to deliver a talk all



about water safety. The children were very excited for the talk as Puddle the duck was there to help teach the children. We looked at some photos in which the children had to look to see if they could spot any potential hazards. These hazards included swimming without an adult nearby and walking too close to the edge of the water. The children also explored the different flag colours they would see at a beach. The session finished with a song and time spent with Puddle!



## Easter Egg Trail

Over the Easter Break the PTA ran its annual Easter Egg Trail around the village which was once again a huge success. Many families took part from near and far and we are very grateful to the village shop for selling the maps. This event raised over £130 which will be put towards exciting things for the pupils to do or new resources for the school. We are very grateful to the PTA for their continued support. This year they have once again funded all of the coach travel for our school trips. The next PTA event is the school disco which is followed by the Class 3 sleepover.

## Goodbye Rev Swanton

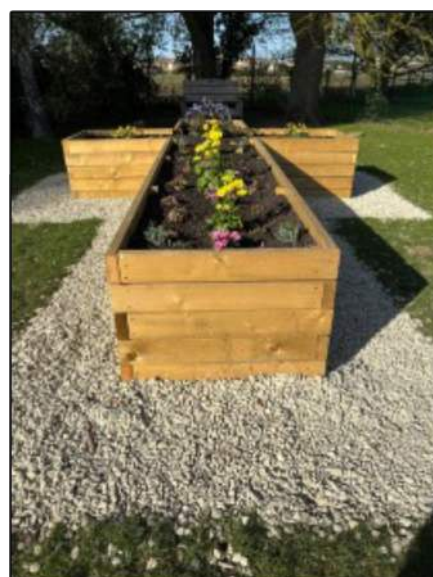
On Friday 11th April we met together to say Goodbye to Rev Swanton as he retired. We were very pleased that he officially opened our spirituality garden. The sun was shining as we all met outside together. We were pleased to be

joined by David Williams from Gloucestershire Diocese, as well as school governors, and parents.



Mrs Gray read a prayer where we prayed for Rev Swanton and thanked God for everything he has done for our school. He was given a retirement gift and then with the help of Ava and Arno he cut the ribbon to officially open the garden. Rev Swanton

then blessed the garden for us. The whole school sang together This Little Light of Mine. It was a lovely, shared time together, and we wish Rev Swanton well as he begins his retirement.



## Computing

This term, Class 2 has been diving into the exciting world of Scratch programming! We started from the basics, learning how to navigate the Scratch environment, including using sprites, costumes, and backdrops. It was fantastic to see everyone getting creative by making animations and games.

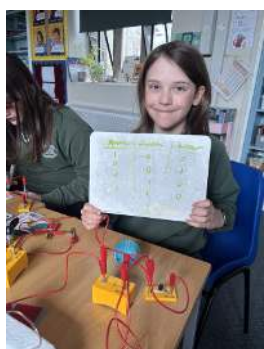
Throughout our sessions, we explored how to modify existing projects, create our own programmes, and proudly share our creations with one another. We delved into key programming concepts such as sequence,

repetition, and selection, which really helped us understand the importance of ordering our commands.

One of the highlights was discovering different backgrounds, which added a brilliant touch to our sprites. We finished the unit on a high note by sequencing sounds, making our projects even more engaging. It's been a wonderful journey, and I'm thrilled to see how much the class has learned and enjoyed Scratch!

## DT

This term, Class One have been learning about wheels and axles in DT. The children spent time exploring creating vehicles, thinking about how to fix axles to wheels and ensure they work properly. Following this, children spent time



designing their own cars for one of their toys. Children spent the next week making their cars, using a variety of resources. Lastly, we evaluated what went well and what we might do differently next time. The

children have thoroughly enjoyed the process, do ask them about what they have learnt!

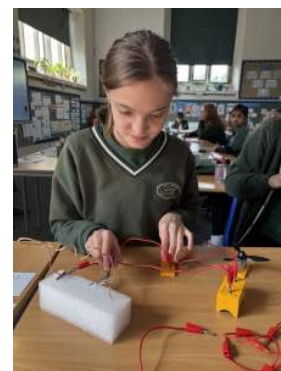


In Class 2, the children have started to research and design their own torch. We have explored different types of torches and thought about their purposes and who would use

them. Then we looked at some design briefs and criteria which informed our sketched designs. Class 2 are very excited to be making their torches soon!



In Class 3 the children have made their own beat the buzzer games using their previous knowledge of electrical circuits. They started by making a simple buzzer circuit, with the two metal parts of the games acting as terminals of a push to make switch. Following on from this, they played around with another switch to 'rig' their games. This taught them more about series and parallel circuits – which affected when the buzzer would be triggered. Applying things learnt in one subject to another is one of the ways that we ensure that children recall key knowledge and can apply it in a different situation.



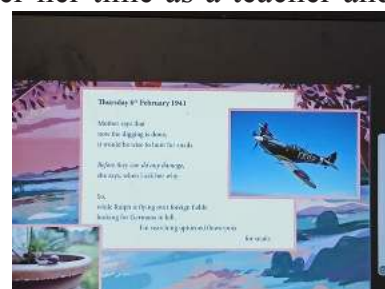
## Belonging Empowering Succeeding Together

A huge well done to Dan, Theo, Oliver and Edie for demonstrating our school motto and being great examples in Term 4. They really have shown how important it is to be the BEST you can be every day.

## Digging for Victory Webinar

The pupils in Class 3 started the term attending a webinar about the book Digging for Victory, written by Cathy Faulkner. This is the start of us marking the 80th anniversary of VE day later in the term.

After introducing herself she explained to the children that she was inspired to write the book after her time as a teacher and trying to teach her class about WW2 and how she could make it more interesting. Cathy read an excerpt from the story and





showed some of the illustrations. Pupils were then asked to write their own start to the story, utilising some sentence starters provided by the author. The children were kept busy with various activities related to the book finishing with a question and answer session.

## Mini Olympics

At the start of this term, some students from year 2,3 and 4 were selected to represent Down Ampney at a Mini Olympics run by Sadie at Kingshill School, Cirencester. The children completed a carousel of activities including badminton, curling, boccia and table tennis in some friendly competition. The children tried each activity several times and thoroughly enjoyed exploring different sports. The young sports leaders were so impressed with the behaviour and sportsmanship from the children that they awarded Down Ampney with an award for teamwork! The pupils were joined by several other local schools such as Southrop, Cirencester, Ampney Crucis and Rodmarton which made for a fun-filled afternoon.



## Welcome to our new families

We are delighted to announce that we have a full cohort for September 2025 and even have a waiting list! We will be welcoming all families to a New Parents Evening on Thursday 22nd May.

### Dates For Your Diary

May 5th Bank Holiday Monday  
 May 8th VE day  
 May 12th - 15th Year 6 SATS  
 May 16th School disco and class 3 sleepover  
 May 22nd Reception 25 intake meet the teacher meeting  
 May 23rd Sports day - parents invited  
 May 23rd Last day of term  
 June 2nd start of term 6  
 June 5th Panathlon  
 June 5th Vision and Values day at Ampney Crucis

