



Spring!

News on the Ninth

May 2021

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Following lockdown, the children are delighted to share just a snapshot of their learning.

Nursery

We have enjoyed looking for signs of spring. We have found and have been learning the names of different types of spring flowers. We have noticed that lots of the trees have blossom on them and some trees have begun to grow their leaves again. We have been very busy planting too; the children have planted their own runner beans; I hope they are all growing well at home. The children have planted herbs in the garden, such as mint, rosemary, and a curry plant. We have also planted potatoes and lavender. The children are enjoying watering and caring for them and watching them grow.



Reception



This month, Reception have been busy learning our new Talk4Writing story: Paper Dolls. We enjoyed retelling the story and making our own paper dolls to take on adventures!

We have also been investigating different kinds of insects as part of our Wanderlust Learning. We have found beetles, ladybirds, millipedes, pond skaters and even a newt in the Forest School.



out lots of



We were very lucky, Mrs Lindsay-Hill is a beekeeper, and she came to tell us all about the bees she keeps in her hive. We asked her lots of questions and found information. We are excited to see which insects we find next!

Year 1



In geography, we have been learning about our local area. We have looked at various types of maps and used what we have learnt to make our own maps of the school grounds. We finished the topic by becoming experts in the schools, parks and leisure activities available in WGC.

In Maths this week, we have been learning about measurement using a blank number line to compare objects using mathematical vocabulary by their mass, length, height and timed events.



We used our Forest School to find signs that spring was coming as part of our learning in science about seasons. The children were encouraged to look at nature really carefully to spot buds, flowers beginning to grow and to find insects.



Year 2



In science, Year Two have been learning about what a plant needs to grow. We conducted an experiment using four cups of cress seeds and placed them in different locations to study their growth. We discovered that although a plant may grow with just water, it needs both water and sunlight to grow healthily.

In maths we have been learning how to recognise different fractions in shape and amount. We discovered how to split different shapes into equal fractions and even built our own human fraction wall!



In Geography we have been working hard on identifying human and physical features. We designed a map of the area around our school and labelled this with a key. We then worked together to find the different human and physical features around our school.



Year 3

This time of year is always exciting and fun in science as we focus on plants. We have already sown our own meadow seeds and vegetables for the allotment beds. As the term goes on, we will be planting more and spending time in the Forest School and the school grounds looking at different plants and flowers.

After learning about the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age, we now move on to the Romans. It has been fantastic seeing some of the things being made at home - well done to Josh for his amazing Roman shield and to Harry for making a full soldier's outfit! We will all have the opportunity to make a Roman shield in class as well as many other exciting Roman activities.

As our DT unit moves forward, we have started to design our 'moving monsters'. We have spent the first few weeks looking at pneumatics and making pneumatic systems - we've had a lot of fun with balloons! It's going to be great fun making our monsters.



Year 4



We are just coming to the end of our Harry Potter descriptive writing unit; the children have been working very hard to expand their sentences and use new vocabulary. Their owls are all settled in now too. Next, we will be learning about letter writing.



For our Science topic about Sound, we made string telephones and tested how they worked, using bent string, tight string, string around corners and string overlapping. We had a lot of fun whilst we were learning!

We also want to apologise for all the ABBA singing you may be experiencing at home; the children are learning how to read music and play glockenspiels to some high quality 70s music!



Year 5



On 22nd April, Year 5 submitted 2 teams for the Hertfordshire maths challenge. Our teams joined lots of other schools to complete a variety of challenging tasks. One was estimating how many bananas there were in a picture containing LOTS of bananas! We had a great time, and we are waiting to find out what our final score was to see how well we did compared to the other schools.

There have been some eagle-eyed observations going on in Year 5 lately. We have been learning about the internal structures of flowering plants to see how they reproduce. First, we researched Carl Linnaeus, who was a Swedish botanist, and produced observational drawings of flowering plants. After learning lots of vocabulary, we then dissected a flower, observed each component with a magnifying glass and made labelled scientific representations. As well as learning a great deal about plants, we also used dissecting knives safely and all our fingers remained safely attached to our hands!



Year 6

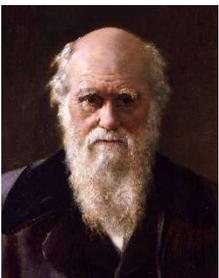
We celebrated our return to school after lockdown with an afternoon of science and art in the Forest School.

We are studying the ancient Maya civilisation in history and learned that one of their earliest forms of communication was with art and paintings. We discussed what sort of paint they must have used and concluded that it must be natural. Therefore, in the Forest School, we searched for natural materials that we could use to make paint. We decided that it had to be dry and that it should have a colour. Once we had found our materials, we decided to grind them down to form a powder. We did not have a pestle and mortar, so we improvised and used flat stones as a base and a grinding tool. We collected our powder and saved it in a container. Our powder was left overnight to dry.



In the meantime, we predicted what we thought would happen when we made our paint from our natural materials. In general, we agreed that mud would make the best paint as it would dissolve more easily. We believed that the materials which were less likely to dissolve, like ground rock or bark, would be less successful.

In our art lesson, we used water or oil to mix with our natural materials from the Forest School to form a paint. The most successful proved to be charcoal, followed by mud. We were correct in our prediction that the less soluble materials would not form a paint, as in tree bark and flower petals. We used our more successful paint to paint birds and wildlife.



In English, we wrote a biography about Charles Darwin. We learned about how a biography needs to be set out and we read some examples. We did lots of research and found many interesting facts. Our teachers were very pleased with the results of our efforts and they now form an attractive display in the classroom.

We are also studying Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution in science. It is only a theory so there is quite a lot of discussion in the lesson about whether he was correct or not. It is fascinating as we are going to look at it again in RE when we look at creation. Where do you think the human race originated?

Watch out Muggles, we are helping Harry Potter find the Philosopher's Stone! Along the way we are analysing texts and producing writing containing cohesive devices such as adverbials of time and place and cohesive punctuation such as dashes and ellipsis. We have also been writing diaries, formal letters and narratives to deepen our understanding of the story. We are well on our way to finding the Stone and saving Harry, and our owls are helping us!



PE News



Although we have been unable to attend any events outside of our school this past year, we have been very busy in school competing in virtual competitions and intra competitions within the year groups during our two hours of PE each week. Thank you to all who engaged in the online challenges – they were a pleasure to watch.



In the autumn term, all year groups were involved in a virtual athletics competition against other schools in the area. All classes had events to complete in, and the scores were recorded. These were then sent into Mr Carolan and we achieved the highest scores across all schools! A fantastic achievement.

There has been a real focus on rebuilding stamina since returning from lock down. Most year groups are now completing a daily mile in the afternoon and as always, PE lessons are planned so that all the children are always active throughout their lesson.

Self and peer assessment are always key to developing PE ability. With this in mind, we have been developing our use of ICT to move learning on using this to develop our understanding of key skills in the various sports.

The PE curriculum continues to be tailored to meet the needs of each class. We focus on ensuring gaps in skill development are addressed.

This week we have chosen our Bronze Ambassadors from Year 5. These children will attend training to develop their leadership skills, which can then be used next academic year alongside playleaders.

Outdoor, active education has been a big focus for us this term. The children have been building on teamwork skills, reading, and navigating maps, making use of the large school grounds that we are so fortunate to have – lots of links to cross – curricular learning too!

PE kits should be in school every day. Please provide trainers rather than plimsols as lessons are taken outdoors.

Diary Dates

May	
18 th May	Year 6 - The truth about drugs talk Year 5 – Zoom meeting with Skern and Parents – 5pm
25 th May	Class photos
31 st May	Bank holiday
June	
1 st June – 6 th June	Half Term
7 th June	Return to School
18 th June	Sponsored Fun Run
29 th June	Young Carers Forum
July	
2 nd July	Year 6 Spruce Class – trip Day 1
5 th July	Year 6 Spruce class – trip Day 2
6 th July	Year 6 Sycamore class – trip Day 1
7 th July	Year 6 Sycamore class – trip Day 2
8 th July	Transition day
19 th July	Year 6 BBQ – 4pm
19 th July	Year 6 Bell Ringing – Sycamore
20 th July	Last day for Nursery children
20 th July	Year 6 Bell Ringing - Spruce
21 st July	End of term – staggered gate times for collection from the usual pick up oints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception – 12.10 – Gate 1 • Year 1 – 12.20 – Gate 1 • Year 2 – 12.30 – Gate 1 • Year 3 – 12.20 – Gate 3 • Year 4 – 12.10 – Gate 3 • Year 5 – 12.30 – Gate 3 • Year 6 – 12.20 – Gate 5
September	
1 st Sept	Staff inset day
2 nd Sept	Children return to school

Term time holidays have a negative impact on friendships and learning. Please avoid taking your child out of school during term time. Term time holidays are not authorised.

Section 7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory age attends school.



Commonswood Primary & Nursery School is a Safeguarding School

We are an Encompass School working with external agencies to support children who are victims of domestic abuse.

'All schools have a clear responsibility placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and by guidance from the Department of Education to safeguard the welfare of all their pupils. In doing so schools are expected to consult with Social Services if they believe there is a possibility that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect.'

If you have any concerns about children please contact 0300 123 4043.

Mrs G Seymour (Designated Senior Person), Mrs S Manning (Deputy Designated Person), Mrs N Scatchard (Deputy Designated Person), Mr S Burt (Deputy Designated Person for eSafety & Mrs D Lindsay-Hill (Deputy Designated Person),

Chair of Governors Mrs Julie Noakes