



## Spring 2 Newsletter

### With God's love, we are

28th March 2024

Next term's value is:

Friendship

Dear Families,

Ramadan Kareem and Happy Easter!

I hope this newsletter finds you all well and in good health, and I am looking forward to the holidays ahead of us, which will see our community celebrating Easter and Eid this year.

It has been a busy and exciting term for all of us. The children have been working hard in their classes and have seen some fantastic progress.

We have also had some exciting events during the spring term. Our annual science fair was a great success, with many exciting projects on display. The school council organised a fantastic Red Nose Day, with lots of red noses in school and plenty of money raised for good causes. Year 4 did a fantastic job leading the church services at St Mary for our end-of-term Easter service. Thank you to all the families that came to celebrate with us. We were blown away by the amount of families that attended our believe and achieved awards this term, so thank you to everyone who came; I know it means a great deal to staff but more importantly to our young people who work diligently day and day out ensuring they go above and beyond consistently in their learning.

Year 6 visited Chiltern Academy to watch the Littel Mermaid, and we were lucky enough to see some past pupils on stage. Last but by no means least was our amazing SIAMS Inspection, where our report highlights all of the hard work of staff and pupils to ensure that our vision and values shine through all aspects of school life. If you haven't read it, it is well worth it: [SIAMS | Wenlock CE Academy \(wenlockacademy.co.uk\)](https://www.wenlockacademy.co.uk)

Looking forward, we have many exciting plans for the upcoming summer term. We will be hosting a sports day and a Wenlocks Got talent show. Some of our Y6s are off to the CYE residential, and Y4 and 5 are getting ready for the summer term, too. We will also celebrate 'maths day'.

After Easter, we go into summer uniform. Please ensure children are in the correct uniform, including PE days. Letters will now be sent home for children not in the correct uniform every day.

We are looking for a volunteer to support our library. We have a lot of new books going into the library, and we need someone to keep it organised so the children can choose books that they will really enjoy reading.

Remember to keep up the reading and online learning this holiday. Just 5 minutes a day adds up to learning gains. In the next half-term, our value will be friendship.

Finally, we say farewell to Mrs Allen today, she has worked at school for 12 years and she is going to be missed by all. We will be welcoming a number of new team members next term, I will write and introduce you in the new term. But for now, I wish you all a wonderful Easter holiday and look forward to seeing you all in the summer term.

Ms Burke and Team Wenlock



# Key Dates

Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 15th April	Inset Day—School Closed
Tuesday 16th April	First Day of Summer Term—Children return to school in summer uniform
Thursday 18th April	Alina Class last Swimming Lesson
Monday 22nd April	Coffee Morning — Sleep Hygiene. More details to follow
Thursday 25th April	Vesper Class first Swimming Lesson
Monday 29th April to Wednesday 1st May	Year 6 CYE Residential trip
Thursday 2nd May	Vesper Class Swimming Lesson
Monday 6th May	Bank Holiday—May Day
Thursday 9th May	Vesper Class Swimming Lesson
Week commencing 13th May	SATs week for year 6
Wednesday 15th May	National Numeracy Day
Thursday 16th May	Vesper Class Swimming Lesson
Monday 20th May	Year 6 Trip to Legoland—More details near the time
Thursday 23rd May	Vesper Class Swimming Lesson
Wednesday 22nd May	School Photographer—Class photo's
Monday 27th to Friday 31st May	Half Term Holiday
Friday 28th June	Singing Spectacular 2.00 pm—7.00 pm

## Attendance

Well done to Genesis Class who achieved the highest attendance week ending 22nd March at 96.4%

The attendance for the whole school was 91.5%

Our school target is 97%

## Alpha Newsletter

### An unbelievable half term in Alpha!

This short half term has definitely been a busy one for us! We have been having lots of fun through our learning and exploring. Of course, we have loved having you all come into see us both at the Science fair and our 'watch us read' afternoon!

### Superb Science

In this half term we have been learning about magnets and friction. We have investigated how friction effects our lives. Did you know that without friction we would be slipping all over the place? Magnets are also used all around us. Did you know if you cut a magnet in half you will end up with two north and two south poles? We also had a lot of fun watching Silly Science come in, they showed us how an explosion can happen with only a few materials!

Ameen, Kian, Arthur and Umar

### Engaging English

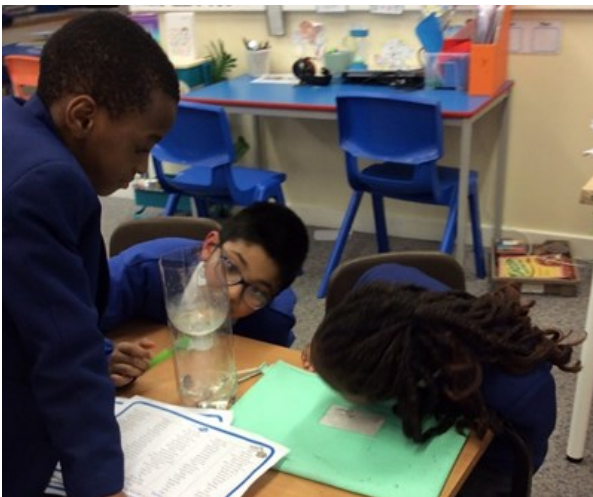
In English, we have written our very own just so stories. We explored how characters' actions can have consequences, some of our characters even ended up on Mars! Throughout the unit we looked at the different fronted adverbials we could include as well as using speech!

Sofia and Reggie

### Vicious Volcanoes and Enormous Earthquakes

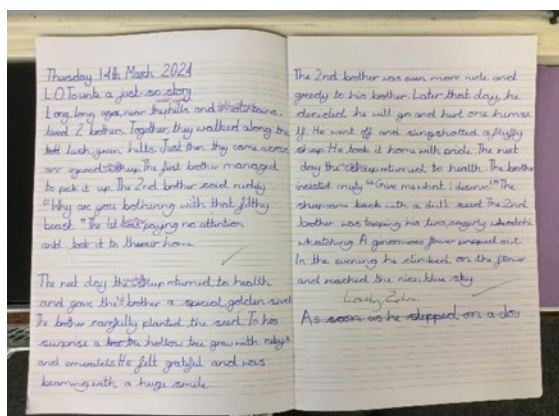
In Geography, we have looked at the structure of the Earth. We have learned that the crust is actually pieces called tectonic plates which float on top of the mantle. The tectonic plates move in different ways, they can rub together which is called transformational movement, this leads to earthquakes. The earthquake happens where the focus is and it turns to a seismic wave which is what we feel as the shake. We have also been learning about how a volcano erupts. Inside the volcano is magma, when the pressure gets too high the volcano will begin to erupt. When the eruption begins the ash cloud will shoot into the sky and the magma will flow down as lava!

Cleo & Umar

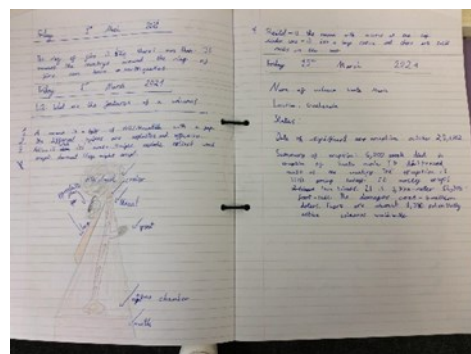


# Genesis Newsletter

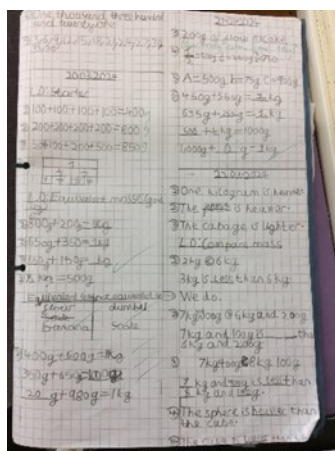
This half term in Genesis has been very exciting and we have squeezed a lot of learning into the short number of weeks.



In English this half term we started by ‘writing a just-so story using ‘The Greedy Man’ and we added fronted adverbials and speech to our stories.’ – Wahab. The children’s imagination for these stories were amazing and they were very excited to read them to the class. ‘We have started to learn about newspapers and have looked at features. We underlined some of the tricky vocabulary and tried using them.’ – Success. We are looking forward to finishing our newspapers after volcanic eruptions after Easter, using our Geography knowledge to help us.



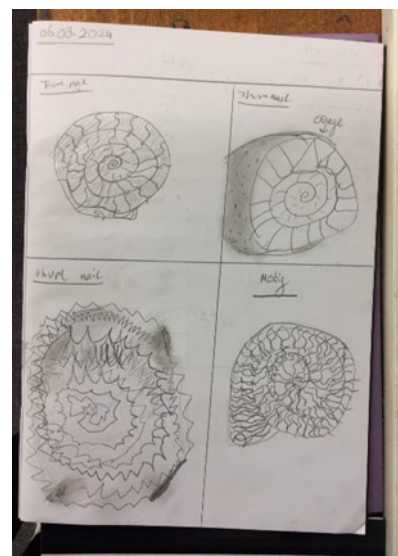
‘In Geography, we have been learning about volcanoes. there are 3 states, active, dormant and extinct.’ – Mansirat. ‘We learnt that when volcanoes erupt it isn’t always the lava that hurts people, it’s the ash clouds that cause lots of damage.’ – Teddy. During our Rocks, and Rumbles unit we have also moved onto the learn about Earthquakes.



‘When tectonic plates meet together, the crust moving can cause earthquakes.’  
– Teddy.

In Maths, during our fractions unit we learnt about ordering fractions. We focused on the language 'ascending and descending. Ascending is like going up the stairs so the fractions are getting bigger and descending is like going down the stairs so the fractions are getting smaller.' – Success. When we finished fractions we moved onto exploring

mass. 'In maths we learn about grams and kilograms, grams are smaller than kilograms because there are 1000g in 1kg.' – Grace.



In Art, we are creating our own ammonite sculpture. To create the right shape we have 'learnt about Fibonacci sequence and the spiral we see in nature.' – Teddy. 'I really liked drawing and writing about Fibonacci in art and planning what colour to use for my drawing.' - Nelson

'In Science, we learnt about magnets and how powerful they are. They have two poles and when opposite poles are pushed together they attract to each other.' – Thora. We have explored friction and its role in real life by carrying out research.

## Omega Class Newsletter

Although this half-term has been super short, Omega class have been working extensively hard in all areas of the curriculum. It has been wonderful to watch them progress, mainly in their writing; some children have even achieved their pen license. "I am proud that I was nominated for the Mega Mathematician award this term- I try really hard in Maths"- **Mahfouz**. "I am really proud of myself for getting my pen license"- **Nuzhat**. "I have been working really hard to memorise my times tables"- **Tamara**.

### **Our highlights this term are;**

"My biggest highlight was when we learned about magnetic force because we got to play with the magnets and investigated which objects around the room were magnetic or not"- **Halima**.

"I loved writing a newspaper report about Willy Wonka's golden ticket"- **Sofia**.

"I like writing stories, so my favourite part of this half-term is English"- **Molly**.

"Science because we learn really cool stuff"- **Zine**.

"I like playing on the climbing frame at lunchtime"- **Denis**.

"I like creating stories in English"- **Fatima**.

"I have enjoyed Maths because it is my favourite subject. I have learned about grams and kilograms"- **Valentin**.

"I like PE because we get to play dodgeball and handball"- **Archie**.

"I love our science lessons because we do lots of experiments, writing and research"- **Zanid**.

"My favourite lesson this half-term is science because it is fun"- **David**.

### **English**

"In English we have been learning to write diary entries, newspaper reports and stories"- **Rashella**. "We have been learning about features of a newspaper"- **Candace**. "I enjoyed learning about the greedy merchant who got stranded on the moon"- **Alayna**. "I have improved my handwriting and I now have my pen license"- **Michele**.

### **Maths**

"In Maths, we have been learning about measuring. I like this because I have learned how to accurately measure objects"- **Daniel**. "We have learned about fractions and their equivalent and this was fun because we were able to shade in a fraction of a shape"- **Mohsin**. "I like measuring in Maths because then I can learn the mass of food"- **Yahya**.

### **Religious Education**

"In RE, we have been learning about Guru's. I enjoyed learning about the Guru's who healed people"- **Aya**. "I really like discussing how God wants the world to be"- **Caitlyn**. "I like celebrating achievements in collective worship"- **Cody**.

### **Believe and Achieve**

A massive well done to Tamara and Adam for winning an award this term. Tamara, you really are a writing wizard and Adam, you are definitely a remarkable reader!!!

# Pupil reporters

Maui I present

## WHAT'S UP IN WENLOCK!

Created by  
Phoebe and Cinnamon  
Year 6

So, what's going on in the academy?  
lets see

### NEW STAFF Member!

we will have a new member of staff in our school, he is specially trained in music and can play a variety of instruments. He will teach some of the students! How cool is that?

There is also a dog named Cinnamon!

owned by Mr Hudson  
Cinnamon is a Cockapoo  
who takes her in on occasions

Cinnamon is a Cockapoo she is very well trained and friendly. She is kind and most of our students love to be around her. On Tuesday, 26th of March, our

very school will walk to St Mary's church for our EASTER SERVICE! Also year 6 are coming up to their SATS So try and prepare your child's time as every student in Year 6 would be grateful if this was done. Thank you for reading What's up in Wenlock and more out! See you next week on Arbour for some more News, News

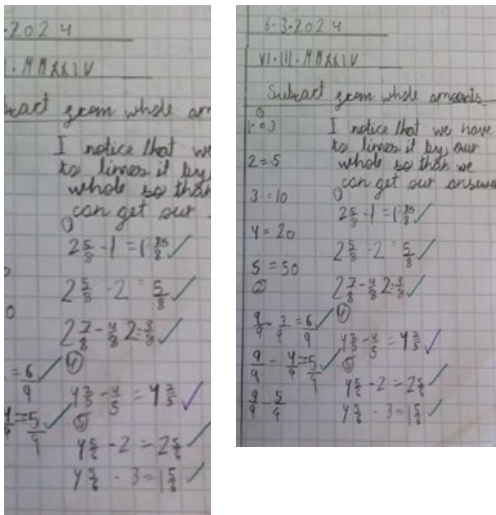


## Vesper Class News

## Geography

In Geography our unit has been 'Misty Mountain, Winding River' we began our learning journey by learning about rivers. We have learnt about the journey a river takes, rivers of the UK and the changes a river makes to the surrounding landscape.

We then moved onto learning about Mountains, we have learnt about the different types of mountains as well as learning about the Mountains within the UK and world.



## Maths

In Maths we have been learning all about fractions. We started off the unit by learning about whole and mixed numbers. As our learning journey progressed we learnt how to convert improper fractions into mixed numbers and then how to convert them back again. At the end of our unit we have been learning how to add and subtract fractions.

We have now moved onto finding length and perimeter of shapes. We started the unit by converting kilo-

## Music

In Music our focus song has been Lean on Me by Bill Withers. To start our learning, we listen to and learn about a different song each week. We then move onto learning how to find the pulse and rhythm to our focus song. We then begin learning how to sing and perform Lean on Me.



## Pupil voice

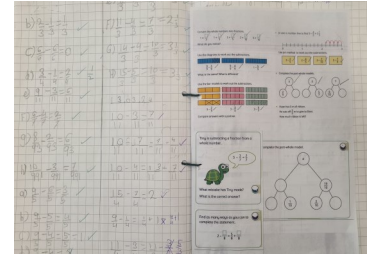
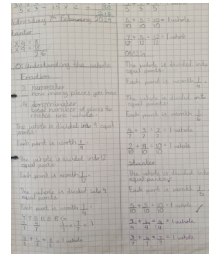
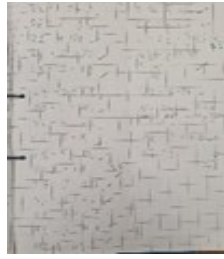
Gabriella- I have enjoyed my Art lessons because I have learnt new techniques to help me draw animals and shading skills to help me shade them.

Tyler- I have enjoyed learning in Geography because I learnt that fold mountains are formed when the tectonic plates collide with each other.

Nicholas- I have had fun in PE because it is learning, fitness and fun all mixed together.

# Aurora class - Spring 2

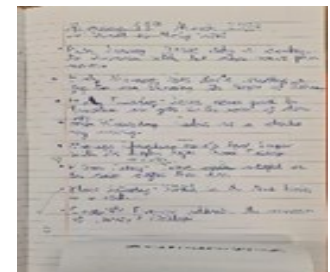
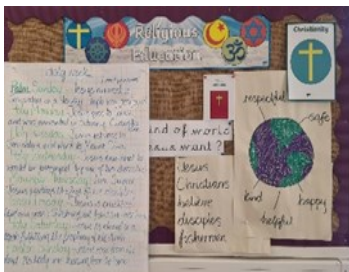
Spring two we have been extremely busy with so much to pack into such a short half term. Maths has been all about Fractions. We have been learning the correct terminology for the parts of a fraction and different types of fractions. For example; numerator, denominator, equivalent fraction and improper fraction. We have also been able to add and subtract not only fractions but mixed numbers, as well as convert from improper fractions to mixed numbers and vice versa.



We have been looking at Classification keys in Science and how to group things according to their characteristics. We have also had fun with Science week doing 'Silly science' where we learned how to make things fly and explode, and which had us looking at the digestive system and making 'poo'!



In R.E. we have been learning all about Easter and Holy week in the Christian calendar and practicing for our church service which took place this week.



Geography has been all about mountains. We have looked at the different types of mountain there are and how they are formed as well as famous mountains and mountain ranges both in the United Kingdom and around the World.



## Alina Newsletter

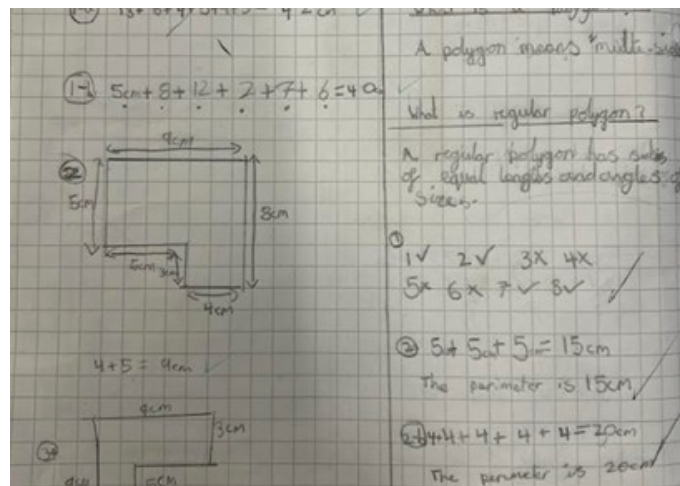
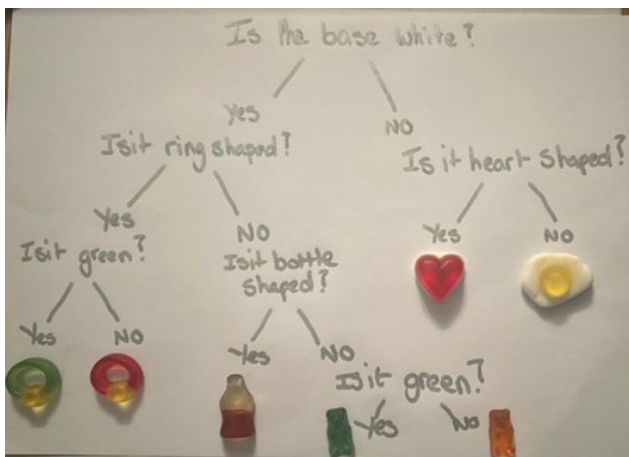
Just like that, we are flying towards the summer. Another very busy but productive term in Alina class. We have finished comparing mixed and improper fractions using a variety of written and pictorial representations. We've then moved into exploring perimeter within a variety of different regular and irregular shapes. Keep this in mind when considering your garden restructure in the summer months.

In English we have continued to flourish with the use for talk 4 writing with the children looking at the use of similes and metaphors to help to build further layers to their descriptive abilities. The children are really beginning to build and show excellent innovation within their ideas and writing.

Moving into Science and the children have been looking at classification. Single stage and multi stage classifications have been explored looking at how animals are identified using their unique characteristics. We were even able to classify a bag of Haribo sweets. Alongside this we had a blast within science week, quite literally with some of the silly science experiments that were demonstrated. We even created our very own pool!

In the wider curriculum we have been exploring the world and wonders of different rivers and mountains looking at how they were formed in the first place. We came across mountains in the U.K as well as some of the largest in the world. Whilst in Art we've continued with our science theme of the animal kingdom and looked at sketching and block printing of different types of animals. This has been super messy but also super fun.

Here we are then, moving on into the Summer term. One I quite simply cannot wait for!



## Solar Newsletter

What an amazing half term it has been with fabulous learning from all children.

In English, we have explored action stories and planned our own versions using different characters and settings. Children practised and implemented a range of punctuation and grammar in their writing such as inverted commas and adverbials of time. The children have also begun to explore explanation texts and its features. They will continue to work on these after the half term and create their very own versions.

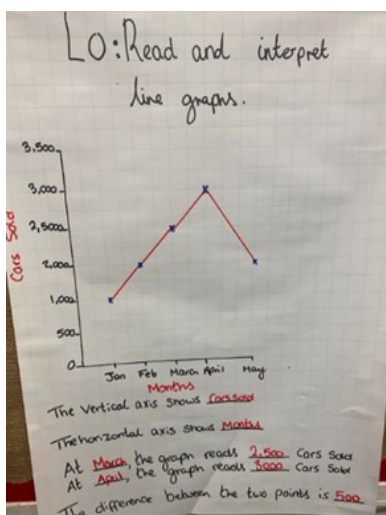
In Maths this term, the children have carried out a lot of work on perimeter and area. They have looked at different types of shapes such as compound and rectilinear shapes and used their knowledge to work out the area and perimeters. They have also looked at Statistics particularly, line graphs, their axis and how to create one accurately.

This term in RE, we have been learning all about Salvation in Christianity. The children have been eager and engaged and ready to share and compare stories from their own and different religions. They have discussed various opinions and ideas about the story of Salvation.

In Geography, children have looked at produce that travels around the world such as Jersey potatoes or coffee from Peru. They have spent time discussing suitable ways for food to travel around the world and the UK so it arrives fresh as well as discussing some limitations.

In Art, children have continued to explore line, light and shadow and used their shading techniques such as cross hatching and smudging to create their very own piece of black and white Art. Children have had the chance to evaluate and explore one another's pieces.

We would like to thank our parents for their continued support and wish you all a lovely and safe Easter break. We are excited to have the children back eager and excited for Summer term!



Key moments	Surprises
- When Jesus was born	- Jesus betrayed Jesus
- When Jesus woke up from the dead.	- Jesus didn't kill Judas so when he knew Judas would betray him
- When Jesus was going to heaven.	- To the people who welcome Jesus to Jerusalem, told Jesus to be crowned - Feelings
Puzzles	
- Why did Judas betray?	- Sad when Jesus died.
- Why did Jesus not kill Judas before Judas <del>betrayed</del> him?	- angry when they crucified him.

The Easter story is when Jesus came to Jerusalem and he got killed. It is important to Christians because he saved us from our sin by dying.

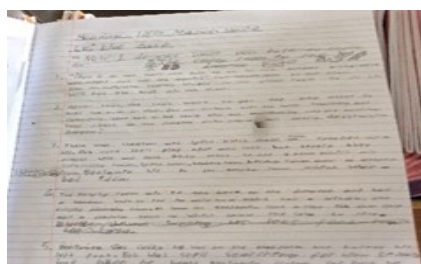
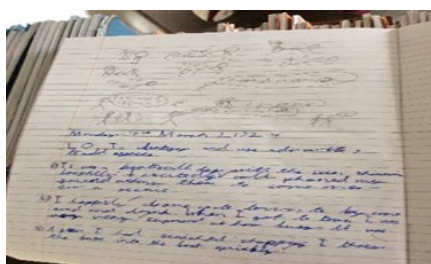
## **Stellar class Newsletter**

What an amazing, busy term we have had in Stellar class.

The children have worked hard in their learning this term. Let's have a look at some of their achievements.

### **English**

The children have been continuing with Talk 4 Writing and looking at the fiction texts. They are now becoming experts at identifying the underlying patterns and being able to create their own versions.



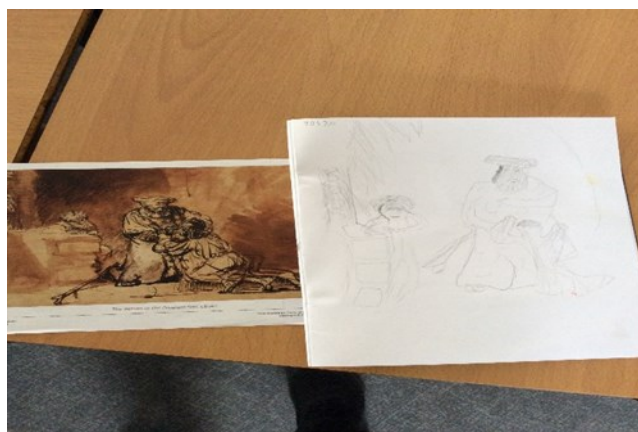
### **Maths**

We have been exploring decimals and percentages, area and perimeter and statistics.

The children have worked really hard in their Math's and are able to understand line graphs and tables extremely well.

### **Art**

We have been continuing with the light, line and shadows theme and exploring creating pieces of art with different materials such as ink, chalk and pencil and using the techniques they learnt in the first half term.

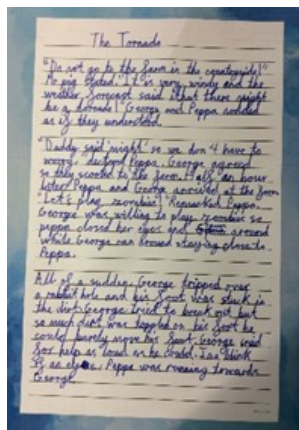


### **RE**

This term, we have looked at Christianity, in particular, "what did Jesus do to save Human beings?".

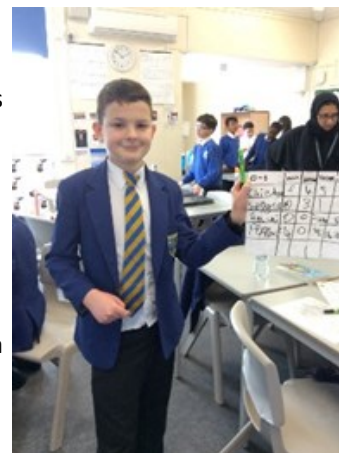
The children have exceptional knowledge on this subject and can verbalise the timeline leading up to his crucifixion and beyond.

## Lunar Class Newsletter



It has been an incredibly busy and jam packed half term of learning! The children have grown in confidence and are able to recall many skills to help them elevate their writing and answer problems in Mathematics.

In English, the children have been learning about writing action stories based on "The Flood" and what devices make for a suspenseful plot. They have incorporated speech to advance their story lines and have been very thoughtful about the verbs and description of settings in order to create an atmosphere. It has been a pleasure to read all of their independent stories.



In Maths, the children have been learning to measure and estimate area and perimeter as well as reading and interpreting line graphs, two-way tables and various time-tables. They have used their knowledge of time to correctly state the duration of train and bus journeys and answering the classic question of "How long until lunch?"

Speaking of tables, we were able to do some cross-curricular learning in our computing lessons; we gathered data on how the children rated different types of pizza and input the results into a spreadsheet. Then, the children used the functions tab to add the result automatically – some said that it was cheating because they could have done calculated it mentally.

In Art, the children have increased their knowledge and skills of using different media – such as chalk, pastel, willow charcoal and ink to create dynamic pictures that use line, light and shadows.

We have investigated the development of a human at different stages of its life cycle; gestation, birth-juvenile and ageing. The children enjoyed sharing how they had changed from a baby until present day and made observations on their older relatives.

In RE, the children revisited the Easter Story and explored the question of "What did Jesus do to save human beings?" This led to some thought-



provoking discussions on what happened and why it happened.



There have been two exciting events; World Book Day and Science Week. It was great to see the engagement of the children throughout the various events; from dressing up as their favourite character to discovering a new genre of book and investigating the concept of time in a range of ways. They improved their percussion skills and keeping rhythm on the djembe drum.

We wish you a fabulous Easter, Ramadan, Holiday and a restful end of term break!

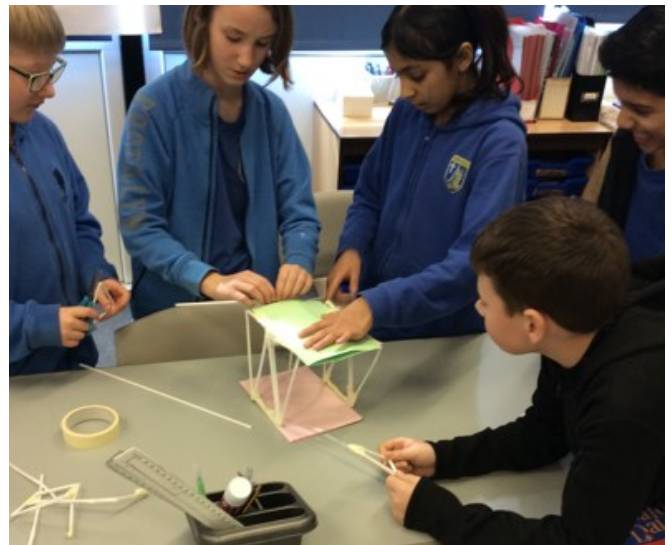
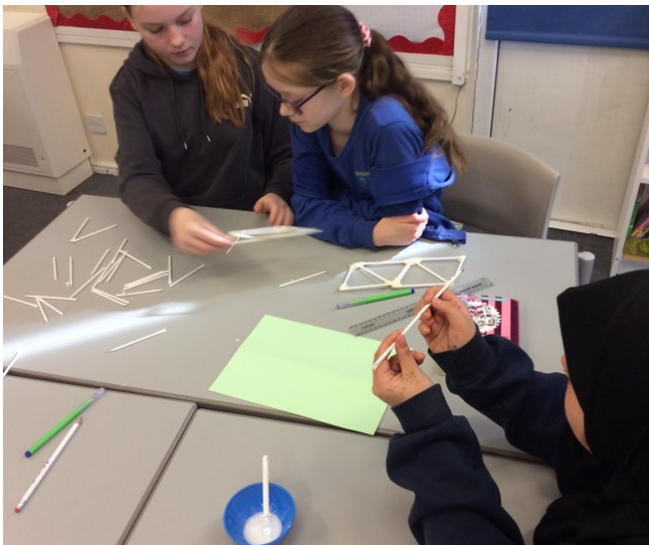
## **Aviary Newsletter**

This term has absolutely whizzed by, it feels like only a week ago since we started! Even though it has been such a short term, the children have been working their absolute hardest!

During this term, the children have revisited fractions and looked at the equivalences between decimals and percentages. They were able to take their learning further and become more confident at finding percentages of amounts. The children also refreshed their memories on finding the area and perimeter of rectangles, triangles and parallelograms.

In English, children have been writing portal stories. The idea behind them was for children to have a character be transported to a whole new place or time through the use of an object or door. The children have been exceptionally creative this term and have led to some very interesting stories.

In DT this term, the children have been taking some of their first steps into engineering. We have been studying different kinds of bridges and how they have developed over the years. Children then started to design and create their very own bridges and see if they can hold the weight of different objects.



In science this term, we have been studying electrical systems. Children have recapped their prior learning from Year 4 and revised their knowledge on components that make up a circuit. The children then conducted an investigation to see the effects on a circuit if you increase the voltage.

Finally, although this has been a short term, the children have earned a well deserved break after all their hard work! I look forward to seeing them all in the Summer term.

# AQUARIUM



# SPRING TERM 2

## Look What We Learned

### MATHS

This half term we have consolidated our knowledge of decimals, fractions and percentages. We have also looked at area and perimeter, and used our understanding of algebra to create equations to help us remember how to find area, perimeter and volume.

### ENGLISH

We have continued our Talk for Writing journey by writing suspense stories, as well as using a range of grammatical features such as subjunctive form to compose an explanation text.

### FROZEN KINGDOMS

In our Geography driver topic of Frozen Kingdoms, we have looked at polar exploration - in particular what caused the expeditions of Scott and Shackleton to fail. We have also considered the causes of the sinking of the Titanic.

### RE

In RE we have considered why the resurrection is important to Christians and the impact it has on their day to day lives. We have looked at the key teaching of salvation within the Bible and had some very mature discussions around the Christian belief that the resurrection leads to salvation.



## The Little Mermaid

We spent a lovely lunchtime at Chiltern Academy this term where we were invited to watch their performance of "The Little Mermaid".



We were inspired to see some of our past Wenlock pupils playing some of the lead roles - we are now even more excited to get started on our Year 6 Leaver's Show!

## Upcoming

- CYE Residential 29.04.24 - 01.05.24
- SATS Week 13.05.24 - 16.05.24
- SATS Breakfast 13.05.24 - 16.05.24
- Legoland Trip 20.05.24

## Arboreal Newsletter

### English

We have written a narrative based on 'The Key'. We focused on setting description and dialogue. We are focusing on at the minute, an explanation text about machines and how things work. We also learnt about the subjunctive form, parenthesis and the active and passive voice.

### Maths

We are currently looking at angles and how to measure and calculate them. We have also looked at area, perimeter and volume. We learnt the formulas to help us work these out. To find the area of right angles triangle: length x width divided by 2. Before this we did percentages, percentage means out of 100. One way of finding a percentage is finding 10% (dividing by 10) then using this to find a power of 10.

### RE

Our big question this half term is 'What difference does the resurrection make to Christians?' We have had lots of discussion around how resurrection might change a Christians decisions in their daily life. As they believe Jesus died to forgive their sins they may find it easier to forgive others because they have been forgiven by God. We also looked at the evidence from the Bible about why Christians believe that Jesus was resurrected and what happened after he came back to life.

### Geography/History

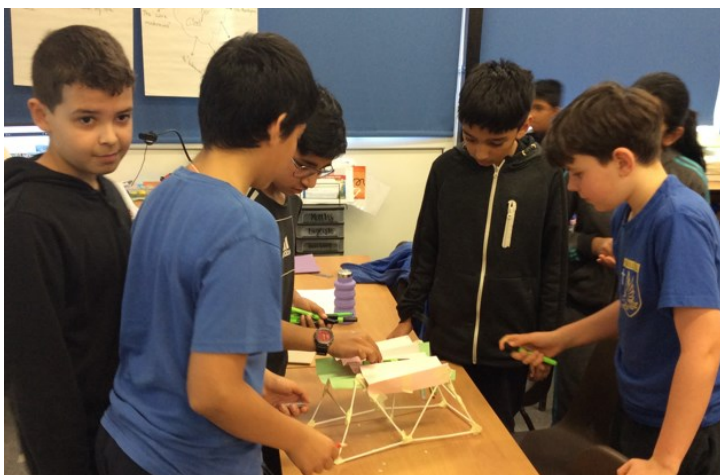
We have continued our topic of Frozen Kingdom. We have looked at some of the key events in history such as exploration of Antarctica by Scott and Shackleton and the sinking of the Titanic. The reason that so many people died on the Titanic was because they didn't have enough life jackets or life boats. They were warned multiple times by other ships but they cared more about the luxury than the safety of the passengers. We have written a newspaper article stating what happened in 1912.

### Science

We have continued to study electrical circuits. We learnt how to use a multimeter to test the voltage of the cell within a circuit. We also looked at what happens when the voltage increases within a circuit. We used the chromebooks to learn how to programme a microbit to become a light sensor within a circuit. We also had silly science in during Science week to show us lots of different experiments

### DT

In DT we have been looking at bridges and their different structures for example arch, suspension, truss and beam. We then practiced making a bridge to see how strong it was using straws, card, tape and glue.



Written by Chloe, Eva and Mutmainnah



UK Health  
Security  
Agency



# Should I keep my child off school?

## Yes

### Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

## No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



### Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrcodes/minfoc>.



**ROLL UP!  
ROLL UP!**

IT'S LUNCH TIME!

**Thursday 25th April**

**Tightrope Spaghetti Strings with  
Carbonara Sauce**

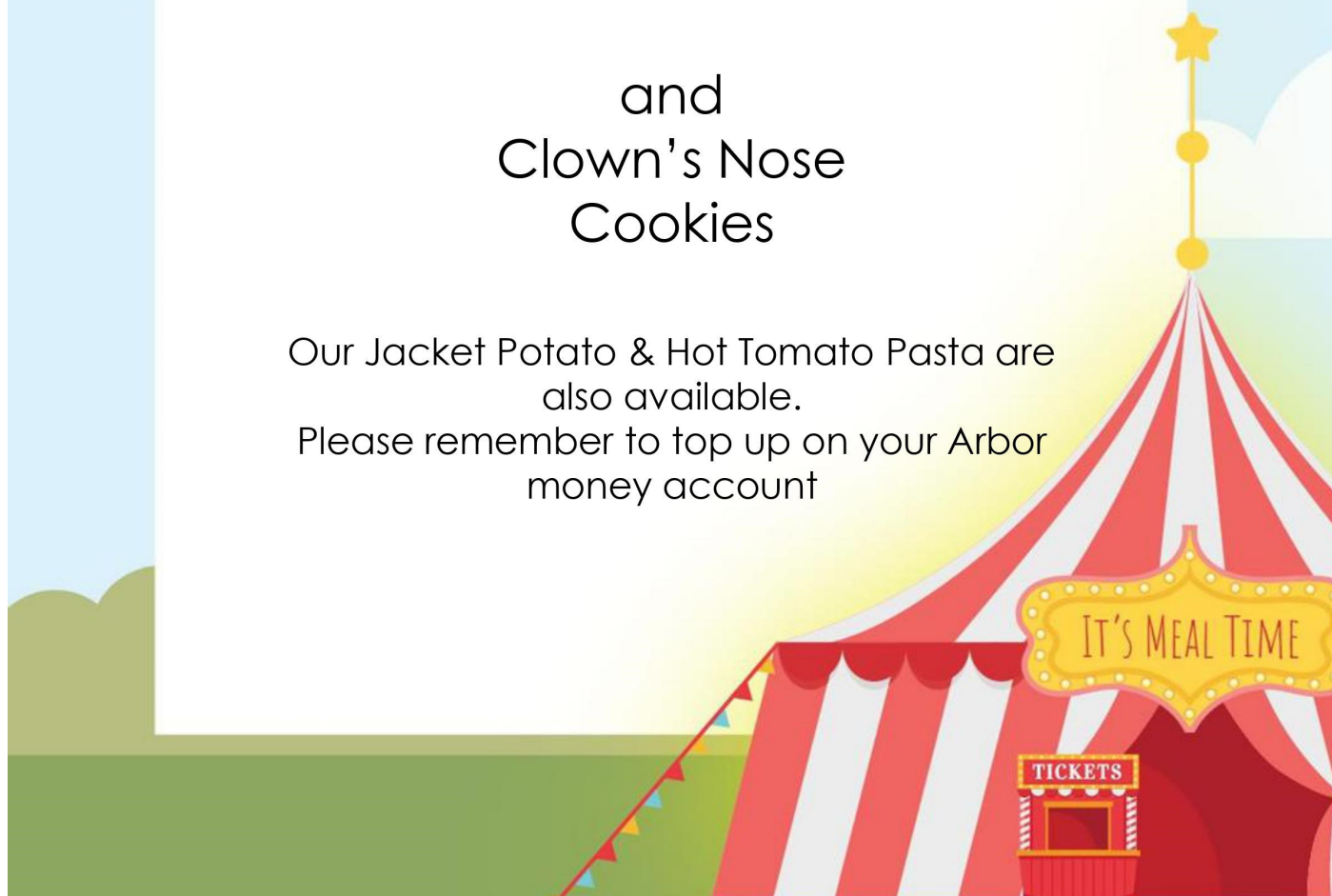
or

**Tiger Striped Veggie Pizza**  
with Cannonball New Potatoes  
and Strongman Spinach Salad

and  
Clown's Nose  
Cookies

Our Jacket Potato & Hot Tomato Pasta are  
also available.

Please remember to top up on your Arbor  
money account



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

### 1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE



Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

### 2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS



Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

### 3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS



Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

### 4 LISTEN ACTIVELY



When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or 'teenage angst' – or to assume that they'll simply 'get over' whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

### 5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS



Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

### 6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES



If a child isn't ready to talk about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

### 7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE



Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

### 8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS



Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

### 9 PROVIDE RESOURCES



It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Kooth or YoungMinds.

### 10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION



It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

## Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

## Cinnamon Update

Cinnamon is settling into life at Wenlock. She is getting familiar with her surroundings and is enjoying all the fuss she is getting on the gate and during the day.

On Monday she even got to enjoy a picnic with our word millionaires.



# FRIENDSHIP

HOME SCHOOL VALUES

This term we will be focussing in school on the value FRIENDSHIP. We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

## TALK TOGETHER about Friendship

Learning to be a good **friend**, someone who can be trusted and is loyal, takes a lifetime.

Talk together about how **friends** come in all shapes and sizes. Some are young, some are old. Some are always there, some we see only occasionally.

- How do we choose our **friends**?
- What makes a good **friend**?
- Are we a good **friend** to others?

## THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"A good **friend** is worth their weight in gold."

Anon

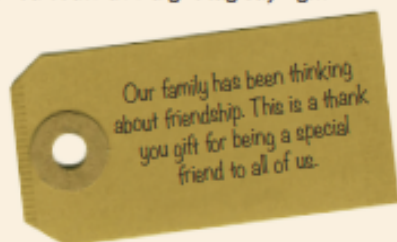
That's a lot of gold!  
Why do you think that this is such a popular proverb?



## FAMILY FOCUS

### Friends of the Family

This term's family challenge is to make a card or present for someone who is a **friend** to your whole family. You could add a gift tag saying...



## READ TOGETHER...

### Through the roof

Jesus reached a town called Capernaum and made his way to a house near the town gate. The crowd had gathered quickly and now even more people were pushing and squeezing into the small house, wanting to see him, hear him and touch him.

The excitement was infectious and four **friends** who lived in a street nearby soon heard the news. They met together and decided that they absolutely *had* to take their **friend** Joshua to Jesus. Joshua was paralysed and couldn't walk. They'd heard that Jesus performed miracles and could heal the sick. This was a chance they couldn't miss.

Wasting no time they carried their **friend** on his bed mat to the house, but jostling crowds blocked the doorway. They couldn't give up now. Their **friend** *must* meet Jesus. There was only one way. They carried him on to the flat roof of the house and carefully removed part of the roof to make a large hole. Knotting ropes to the corners of the bed mat they gently lowered Joshua down right in front of Jesus. Imagine the surprise of all the people looking on. But Jesus smiled kindly at Joshua. "Take up your bed, and walk" he said. Slowly, falteringly and hardly daring to believe it was happening, Joshua stood and took a step forward. He could walk. He could actually walk! Thanks to Jesus and his **friends**, Joshua's life was changed forever!

Bible story based on Mark 2:1-12



## QUIZ Picture puzzle

Take the first letter of each object to discover who helped the paralysed man.



-----  
-----  
and  
-----



## FASCINATING FACTS

### Friendship Bands

**Friendship bracelets** are usually handmade and given to a special **friend**. According to American tradition you must wear the bracelet until the cords break and it falls off naturally. In this way you honour the love and hard work your **friend** put in to making it.



### Raksha Bandhan

One special type of **friendship** bracelet is a Rakhi. Each year, normally in August, many Hindus mark Raksha Bandhan. The festival is a celebration of family life and in particular the relationship between brothers and sisters. They remember and talk about special times together, and think about loyalty, closeness, trust and their everlasting **friendship**.

- Traditionally sisters tie a sacred thread, a Rakhi, on to their brothers' wrists.
- In response the brothers give their sisters a gift promising to help them whenever the need arises and to always protect them.
- Celebrations continue throughout the day with gifts of sweets and special food as families enjoy the time they share together.



## HALL OF FAME



### A dog is a man's best Friend

Near the village of Beddgelert in North Wales is a beautiful sculpture of a very special **friend**.

According to legend, the monument marks the resting place of the faithful dog, Gelert, who once belonged to the medieval Welsh Prince, Llewelyn the Great. A tombstone tells the story of a fateful day when Llewelyn went out hunting leaving the faithful hound, Gelert, to guard his young son. On his return Gelert sprang to greet his master, but Llewelyn noticed some blood on his fur. He rushed inside his house. To his horror the first thing he saw was his son's cot. It was empty!

The frantic father turned on the dog, thinking he must have harmed the boy. He killed Gelert there and then with his sword. At that moment a child's cry rang out through the house. Llewelyn searched and discovered his boy unharmed, but nearby lay the body of a mighty wolf which Gelert had killed before it attacked the small child.

Prince Llewelyn is said never to have smiled again and with tears of sadness he buried Gelert in this place, which became known as "the grave of Gelert", or in Welsh, Beddgelert.



## HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

Use your imagination to make the best **friendship** bracelet ever – using knotting, threading beads, twisting ribbon, whatever you can think of. The more original the better!

or, if you prefer...

make your own large version of the picture puzzle (over the page), joining 5 or 6 words about **friendship**. Either draw pictures or cut them out of magazines.