

The Autumn Issue 2
2025

The Hermitage Schools Newsletter



A Message from Mrs Spires

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a wonderfully busy and joy-filled term, I want to take a moment to reflect on all that our children, staff, and wider community have achieved together. It has been a half term full of energy, learning, and celebration. Our school value of Respect has been at the heart of everything we've done—respect for ourselves, for one another, for our environment, and for our planet. The children have risen to this challenge beautifully, showing kindness, maturity, and thoughtful behaviour throughout. Admittedly, maintaining this as excitement built to a December crescendo was no small task, but they managed it with impressive enthusiasm and spirit!

I would also like to offer huge congratulations and heartfelt thanks to our brilliant PTA, the Hermitage Schools Association (HSA). Their commitment to building our school community has shone through in every event and initiative this term—from discos and non-uniform days to the fantastic success of the Christmas Fair. The launch of the new HSA logo and the arrival of our very own Hermitage Hedgehog mascot, who you will no doubt see an increasing amount of as the year progresses, have added an extra layer of pride and fun to our school identity. The funds raised have been extraordinary and are a true testament to the generosity, involvement, and warmth of our parent body. Thank you for everything you do.

As we step into the festive break, I hope each of you finds time to rest, connect, and spread a little extra kindness and joy. On behalf of all of us at school, I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming you back in January for another exciting term ahead.

Warmest wishes,
Clare Spires



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Executive Head Teacher
Mrs Larsen - Infant Deputy
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Mrs Condon - Junior
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EYFS

Nursery and Reception

'It has been heart warming to see them embrace and enjoy these festivities, making this a truly memorable time for everyone involved.'



This half term, Reception children have been exploring the theme “What do you enjoy celebrating?” Through this exciting topic, they learned about a range of celebrations, including Diwali, Halloween, Hanukkah, and Christmas. We also discussed how Remembrance Day is not a celebration but rather a day of remembrance to honour those who fought in wars. The children thoroughly enjoyed discovering the customs and traditions linked to each occasion. They created vibrant rangoli patterns for Diwali, carved pumpkins for Halloween, explored a menorah and played dreidel games for Hanukkah, decorated Christmas trees, and made poppies for Remembrance Day. These activities were not only fun but also helped the children appreciate the rich diversity of cultures and traditions.



In addition, the children were really busy preparing for their Nativity play. They have been learning lines and practicing songs with great enthusiasm. The Nativity is always a highlight of the term, and the children were thrilled to share their hard work with family and friends.

Overall, this half term has been a wonderful journey of discovery and celebration, fostering a sense of community and understanding among the children. It has been heart warming to see them embrace and enjoy these festivities, making this a truly memorable time for everyone involved.

Our Nursery children have also been learning about celebrations, with a focus on traditional tales through the topic “Who’s been sitting in my chair?” They explored stories such as The Three Billy Goats Gruff and The Three Little Pigs through engaging role-play activities. The children loved acting out the characters, building bridges and houses, and even pretending to be the Big Bad Wolf! This hands-on approach brought the stories to life, sparking their imaginations and helping them understand the morals behind these classic tales.



Year 1



This half term, we have absolutely loved exploring our “Terrific Toys” topic! We delved into our toy-themed text Traction Man by Mini Grey and used it as inspiration to write our own imaginative stories.

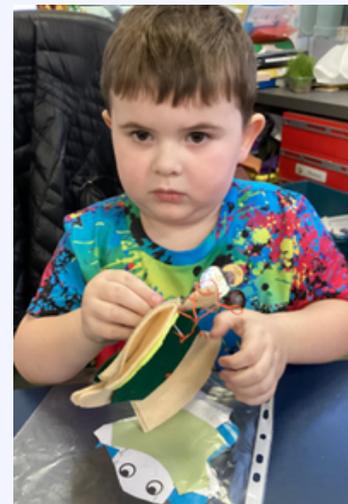
We also travelled back in time to learn about toys from the past. The children spoke to their grandparents about favourite childhood toys and enjoyed our visit from Chertsey Museum. They were fascinated to discover how old toys were made, how they worked, and even had the chance to play with some of them!

In Design and Technology, the children became toy designers as they planned and created their own Traction Man puppets, sewing them together independently with fantastic focus and creativity.

To finish the term on a high note, the children performed their Nativity. They worked incredibly hard to learn their songs and lines and put on a wonderful show that made us all very proud.

Well done, Year 1, for all your hard work this term! ✨

‘They were fascinated to discover how old toys were made, how they worked, and even had the chance to play with some of them!’



Wow - Another exciting half term in Year 2! The children have been so busy this half term with Christmas Craft Day, pantomimes, brush parties and getting ready for the nativity. They have also been learning about different castles across the UK and thinking carefully about where they are located and why. They then used this knowledge to plan where they would build their own castles!

In English, we have been reading *The Jolly Postman* and following his journey, working out where he might be headed to next. We have enjoyed reading lots of different traditional tales as well as some fairy tale twists!

It's been such a busy half term, we hope you all have a fabulous break and we look forward to seeing everyone in January where we will begin our new topic of 'Oh I do like to be beside the seaside'.

Year 2



'We hope you all have a fabulous break and we look forward to seeing everyone in January'

In DT the children have been hard at work, creating their own castles where they have been experimenting with a range of different resources and finding the best way to join materials together or to make their castles even stronger. Thank you so much for your donations - the children have had so much fun making these!



Year 3



‘It’s been lovely to see how much the children have grown and achieved’

It’s been a fun-filled and action-packed half term in Year 3, with plenty to celebrate, and it’s been lovely to see how much the children have grown and achieved.

In English, we’ve been diving into *The Secret Explorers*, which the children have really enjoyed. Using the book as inspiration, they wrote setting descriptions and suspense stories and we loved reading their imaginative work!

In Science, we’ve been learning all about animals and humans, including body parts, skeletons, muscles, nutrition and what makes a healthy, balanced diet. One of the highlights was making model hands with moving “muscles,” which the children found fascinating. They also made flatbreads and dips from scratch using lots of healthy ingredients and tasting them certainly went down well with everybody! This activity linked brilliantly with Maths, giving the children the chance to practise measuring carefully, adding ingredients accurately and following instructions step by step.

To finish off the term, we had our festive Christmas Brush Party, which was such a lovely way to end our busy half term. The children produced fantastic artwork and were so proud of what they created.

Year 4

Year 4 had a fantastic start to this half term and were excited to take part in an amazing Mexicolore workshop on Friday 7th November. We learned all about the Aztec and Maya people including how important chocolate was, especially when you turn 52 years old! We especially loved having a go at chanting and drumming and even trying on some traditional clothes woven in Mexico!



In the run up to the most exciting time of the year, we were busy rehearsing for our Christmas concert which we hope you enjoyed as much as we did.



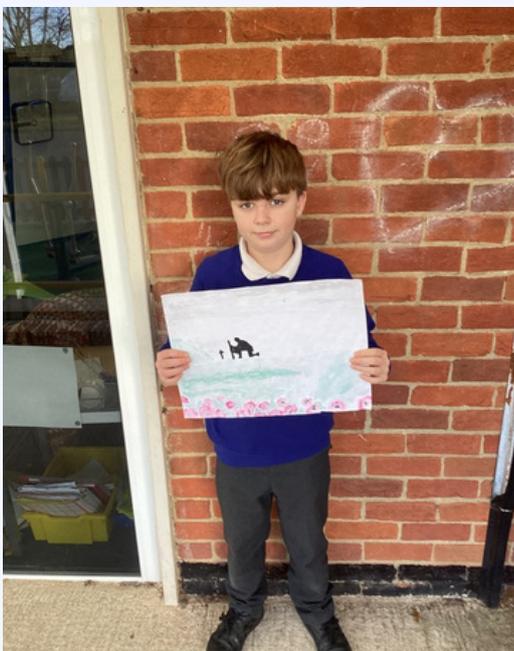
Year 5



This half term, the children have enjoyed learning all about World War One, exploring how the conflict began and the impact it had on the lives of soldiers and families. As part of their learning, the children thoroughly adored their recent visit to Brookwood Cemetery. The children had the chance to walk among the memorials and reflect on the bravery and sacrifice of those who served.

The visit was a powerful and memorable experience, helping the children to empathise with World War One. In Art, children have also enjoyed using watercolours to create a beautiful poppy pictures. These pieces showed great care and understanding of the symbolism of remembrance.

We have also been reading the novel *Stay Where You Are and Then Leave* by John Boyne. We are very proud of the children's enthusiasm, sensitivity, and creativity throughout their learning.



'The visit was a powerful and memorable experience'

Year 6

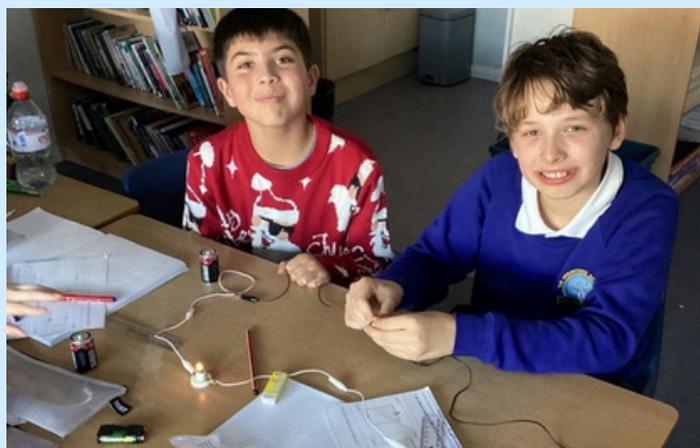


I really enjoyed the talk from the marine biologist because all the animals and microorganisms were fascinating and interesting. My favourite part was when he explained about the use of clean snow for fresh water. Being a marine biologist seems exciting, but you do have to spend a lot of time in the water and on a boat. – Laith, Year 6

This half term, Year 6 have been exploring the wonders of Antarctica! We've delved into its unique climate, incredible wildlife, and the pressing challenges posed by climate change. The children also climbed aboard Shackleton's epic journey, learning about the incredible hardships and struggles faced during his adventure.

A highlight of our learning was a frosty talk from Dr Huw Griffiths, a marine biogeographer with the British Antarctic Survey. He shared his experiences of life in Antarctica and gave us an amazing insight into the research being carried out there.

It was an inspiring session that truly brought our topic to life!



In Science, Year 6 have been diving into the fascinating world of electricity. The children have explored how different components work together to create complete circuits and power bulbs. They've investigated the role of batteries and cells, experimenting with varying numbers of bulbs to see how this affects brightness. This has helped the children understand key concepts such as conductors, insulators, and the importance of a closed circuit. It's been an illuminating topic that has truly sparked their curiosity!

The Orchard



In the Orchard, we've loved exploring the story Iron Man by Ted Hughes as the inspiration for our writing lessons. The children have worked hard to develop their sentence-writing skills and had great fun designing traps to capture the Iron Man, explaining their ideas using bossy verbs

find a good place to set the trap.
make a big footprint.
put sticky stuff in the
foot print. wait until the
Iron man stands on it.
Trap the ironman.

'We've also really enjoyed all the exciting events over the past few weeks and have adapted brilliantly to the changes in our routines. A particular highlight was the Brush Party—it was a firm favourite!



Sports



A huge congratulations to our girls' football team for their incredible 4-0 victory away in the Surrey Schools County Cup! It was an outstanding performance from the team. They now advance to the quarter-finals. What an achievement! Best of luck, girls!

Year 6 Boys Football Team

The boys were fantastic from start to finish winning every game and all without conceding a goal. Amazing achievement, well done boys!



Year 5 Boys Football Team

The boys played really well with some unlucky results which unfortunately meant they were unable to progress from their group but there were a lot of positives to take for next time.



Year 4 Boys Football Team

The boys performed brilliantly against some very strong oppositions. Even after some amazing defending and attacking displays the boys narrowly missed out on progressing out of the group. Great effort boys.



Congratulations to Year 5 pupil Josh, who won gold at the Southeast Regional Gymnastics Competition! Josh competed in both the floor and vault events, placing first. What an amazing achievement. Well done, Josh!

In other news

School Notice: Promoting Healthier Travel to School

We encourage all families to consider healthier and more sustainable ways of travelling to school. Walking, cycling, or using a scooter are excellent options that help children stay active, reduce traffic congestion, and support a cleaner environment.

Where possible, please avoid unnecessary car journeys. If driving is essential, we ask that you park a short distance away and walk the remainder of the journey with your child. This not only promotes physical activity but also helps keep the area around the school safer and less congested.

Together, we can make the journey to school healthier, safer, and more enjoyable for everyone.

0 days off school in a year 0 lessons missed	100%	Perfect attendance
2 days off school in a year 10 lessons missed	99%	Excellent attendance
5 days off school in a year 25 lessons missed	97%	Good attendance
10 days off school in a year 50 lessons missed	95%	Slightly below average attendance
14 days off school in a year 70 lessons missed	93%	Poor attendance
20 days off school in a year 100 lessons missed	90%	Very poor attendance

School Notice: Attendance

"The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education 10. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. 11. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being." Page 8 Working to improve school attendance Department For Education .

More information on your child's attendance at school and national expectations can be found by following this link. School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK

As we move into the colder months, please ensure that your children are dressed warmly in appropriate clothing. Sturdy footwear is required for safety and comfort—trainers are not permitted.



Important Dates or Whole school Events

January 6th - All children return to school

19th-23rd January - Art Week

2nd - 6th February - Children's mental health week

6th February - Wear a scarf to school day

