



16 May 2025

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Headteacher's insight

As we come to the end of another productive week, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what a truly lovely week it has been — not just in terms of the weather, but also in the many positive moments we've shared as a school community. The sunshine has certainly lifted everyone's spirits and brought a real sense of energy to our learning. With the warmer temperatures and bright skies, we've made the most of every opportunity to take learning outdoors. From **storytelling sessions** under the shade of trees, to **science investigations** in the playground, and **creative writing** inspired by the natural world around us — it has been a joy to see our pupils so engaged and enthusiastic in these open-air environments. The heat has of course at times caused some challenges as it can make some people feel a little more irritable but the children have navigated this well and taking sun safety quite seriously. Please do ensure all children have **hats, water** and access to **sunscreen**.

This week has also been a particularly important one for our Year 6 pupils as they undertook their end-of-Key Stage 2 SATs. We are all incredibly proud of how they have approached the week — with maturity, calm focus, and a real sense of purpose. SATs can be a challenging time, but our Year 6 children have shown great resilience and positivity. Just as importantly, they have continued to be excellent role models for the rest of the school. Their supportive behaviour, kindness to one another, and respectful attitude has not gone unnoticed by staff and younger pupils alike. They have truly demonstrated the values we hold dear in our school community.

As we look ahead to the final week before the half-term break, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff, parents, and carers for the continued support you give your children and our school. It really does make all the difference. I hope you all enjoy a restful and sunny weekend together, making the most of this beautiful weather. Let's finish the half term on a high next week!

Mrs Thompson

Mrs Emily Thompson
Executive Headteacher





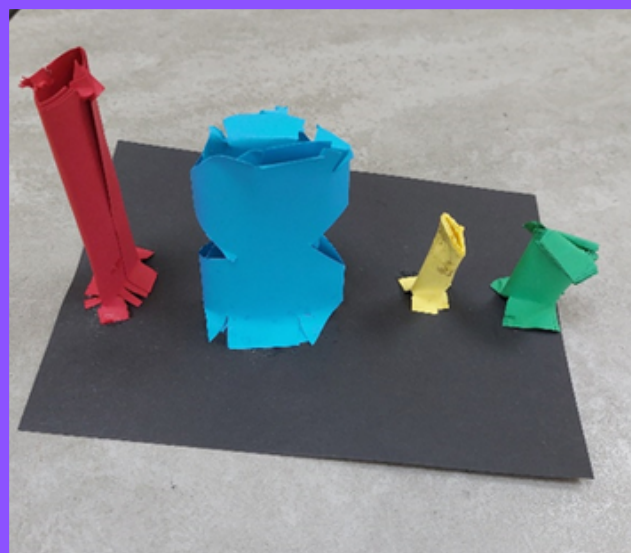
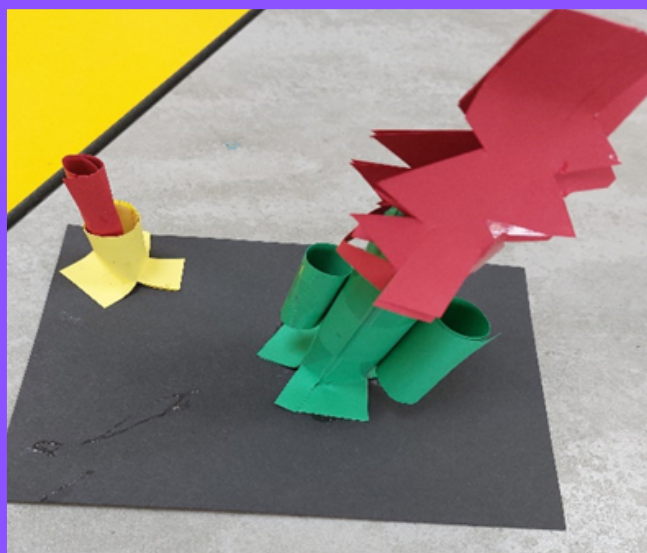
News from our classrooms

Hurricanes Class

We've had a fantastic week full of learning, creativity, and adventure in our class!

This week, the children have been busy mastering counting in 2's, 5's and 10's. We've been learning new stem sentences to help us record. We have been looking at the number patterns and practising skip counting using number lines and a 100 square.

Last Friday our classroom was transformed into a mini **sculpture studio**! Using rolled-up card to make tubes, the children built their own 3D sculptures. We explored how to make the towers wide and narrow, how to cut different shapes into the tubes and the different ways they could be joined together, the children thoroughly enjoyed being creativity — each sculpture being unique.



In History, we've embarked on an exciting journey to discover some of the world's most famous explorers. This week we have sailed the seas with a focus on Christopher Columbus.



Comets Class

What a fantastic week it's been in Reception! Comets Class have been diving under the sea and have read '**The Sea Below My Toes**' as part of their literacy work, discovering all sorts of fascinating underwater animals. The children have been learning about the importance of protecting our oceans. They worked hard to create eye-catching posters to persuade others to look after the sea and its amazing creatures – we're so proud of their thoughtful messages and vibrant artwork!

In **Maths**, we've been exploring the world of **3D shapes**. The children have enjoyed handling and naming shapes like cubes, spheres, cones and cylinders, and spotting them in everyday objects around the classroom and outside.

The sunshine has brought out the artists in all of us this week! The children have loved painting outside, using nature as inspiration. They've also been working brilliantly in teams, taking on exciting challenges such as building bridges with construction materials – showing great communication, cooperation, and problem-solving skills.

In **PE**, teamwork was again the theme, with children enjoying active games that build strength, balance and confidence. We have been learning that we might not win every time, and that's ok!

Comets Class have also been learning how to programme **Beebots**! The children have had a great time giving simple instructions to the Beebots. It's been an exciting introduction to programming, and the children have shown fantastic problem-solving skills as they take their first steps in the world of coding! It's been a week full of learning, laughter, and collaboration – well done Comets Class!



Hercules Class

What a week it has been!

A huge well done to our Year 6 pupils who tackled their **SATs** this week with determination, focus and courage. They approached each paper with a brilliant attitude and truly gave it their all – we're incredibly proud of their efforts! As a well-deserved treat, they enjoyed a picnic in the park today, basking in the sunshine and celebrating the end of a busy assessment week.

Meanwhile, our Year 5s have shown outstanding independence and resilience, working sensibly and maturely in their respective classes while continuing their own learning journey. Their excellent behaviour and positive choices have really stood out – well done, Year 5!

In **Maths**, we have been diving into the world of **algebra**; exploring function machines and substitutions. It's been fantastic to see so many lightbulb moments as pupils began to understand how numbers and symbols can work together logically.

In **History**, we explored the concept of historical significance through the lens of the 5Rs (Remarkable, Remembered, Resulting in change, Resonant, and Revealing). Using a source carousel, pupils worked in small groups to analyse whether Ranjit Singh fits these criteria — some great discussions and thoughtful conclusions emerged!

Our **PSHE** lessons focused on money, loans, and borrowing, with pupils learning essential life skills around managing finances and understanding the impact of financial decisions.

Finally, in **Science**, we continued our topic on **Evolution** and **Inheritance** by looking at how animals adapt to their environments. From the camouflage and strength of the tiger, to the regeneration abilities of the axolotl, and the insulating features of the polar bear, we uncovered fascinating examples of survival in action.

Have a restful weekend – we're already looking forward to more learning and fun next week as we near the end of Summer 1!



Hercules Class





Vulcan Class

Vulcan Class has been a hub of hands-on exploration and thoughtful discussion this week. In **science**, we investigated what **seeds** need in order to **germinate**. After making predictions and planting seeds earlier in the term, the children finally revealed the test plants—some of which hadn't grown at all and compared them with the plants that are growing in normal conditions. We noticed that seeds without water or warmth hadn't germinated, while the seed in darkness had managed a pale, spindly shoot. Using rulers and careful observation, we recorded data in a table and debated whether light really matters in the early stages of a plant's life. We are now watching the plant that germinated in darkness to see how it changes over time.

Meanwhile, in **art**, the children explored the idea of **sculpture** and **negative space**, inspired by Rachel Whiteread. Using play dough tiles, they experimented with impressing everyday objects into the surface. Pegs and bubble wrap made amazing patterns on our tiles. Each tile turned into a little record of the maker's choices, patterns, and problem-solving.

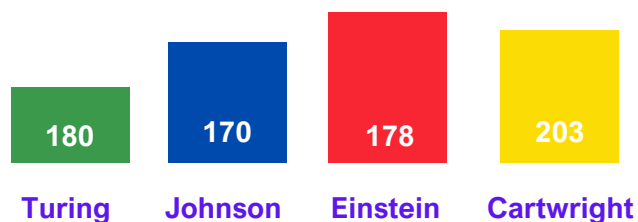
In **English**, our focus has been preparing to write persuasive letters. We took our punctuation practice outdoors, where the sunshine helped us master how to use commas in a list—one of those tiny bits of punctuation that can make a big difference.

As ever, the children have embraced all of our learning and continue to make us proud. Well done Vulcan Class.





House Point Totals



Staffing Update: SENCo and Inclusion

As you know Miss James, our Executive Deputy Head for Inclusion and SENCo, will be starting her maternity leave from 2nd June. We wish her all the very best during this exciting time and look forward to welcoming her back in due course.

For the final half term of the school year, Mrs Thompson, our Executive Headteacher, will be taking on the SENCo responsibilities. Mrs Thompson has her SENCo qualification and several years experience as SENCo so we are confident that the support for children with SEND and inclusion needs will continue seamlessly.

If you have any questions or need to get in touch, Mrs Thompson can be contacted via email at ethompson@anglianlearning.org or the school office.

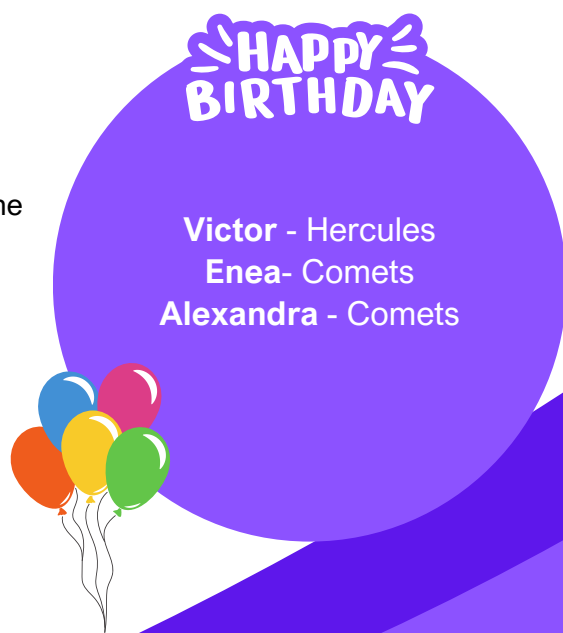
We will be sharing the updated structure of our Inclusion Team after the half-term break. This new structure will be in place from September 2025 to ensure continuity and strong support for all our learners.

Sports Day – Save the Date and Timings

We're excited to share that this year's Sports Day will take place on **26th June** with a **9:30am start**. Parents and carers are warmly invited to join us from **9:15am**, with the event running through to midday.

It promises to be a fun-filled morning of sporting activities, teamwork, and plenty of cheering from the sidelines! Please pop the time in your diaries—we'd love to see as many of you there as possible.

We note this date has changed from 25th June.





School dinners

Don't forget to order your child's school dinners before midnight on Saturday, if you have any issues please email **primary@impactfood.co.uk**

Blackbirds Trip to Thurlow Estate

All children going on the trip to **Thurlow Estate** on **Friday 23 May** must arrive at school for **8:15** and come straight to the **office** (not the main gate).

Please remember:

- A packed lunch and snack
- A named water bottle
- Sensible clothing suitable for a full day of outdoor activities (including appropriate footwear and a waterproof if needed)
- To pay your contribution in MCAS

If you've yet to provide consent please click here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/YASLmYTfPX>



Term Dates 2024/25

Spring term

Monday 6th January to Friday 4th April

Half term: Monday 17 February to Friday 21 February

Monday 24th February to Friday 4th April

Easter holidays: Monday 7 April – Friday 18th April

Summer term

Tuesday 22nd April to Wednesday 23rd July

Back to school Wednesday 23rd April

Bank holiday Monday 5th May (school closed)

Half term: Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May

Back to school Tuesday 3rd June

Last day of term 23rd July

INSET Days (closed to pupils)

Tuesday 22 April

Monday 2 June

Term Dates 2025/26

Autumn term 2025

Thursday 4th September to Friday 24th October

Half term: Monday 27th October – 3rd November

Tuesday 4th November to Friday 19th December

Christmas holidays: Monday 22nd December to Tuesday 6th Jan

Spring term 2026

Tuesday 6th January to Friday 13th February

Half Term: Monday 16 February to Friday 20 February

Monday 23rd February to Friday 27th March

Easter Holidays: Monday 30th March to Friday 10th April

Summer term 2026

Monday 13th April to Friday 22nd May

Half Term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May

Monday 1st June to Friday 17th July

Summer Holiday: Monday 20th July onwards

INSET Days (closed to pupils)

Monday 1st September

Tuesday 2nd September

Wednesday 3rd September

Monday 3rd November

Monday 5th January

Monday 20th July

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase, which is typically around £15. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

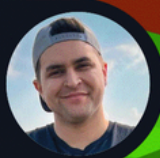
Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.



BIG LUNCH

2025

Sunday 8th June
12pm to 4pm

DUDLEY ROAD PARK

FREE ENTRY

JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FUN!

Live music

BBQ, stalls and games

Laughter workshop

Chair yoga

Science activity

Raffle and tombola

Fun For All Ages! Come and join us

