

Park School Spring Newsletter





The Art room has been buzzing with creativity, as our Year 11 students fully immerse themselves in preparing for their GCSE exam, now just around the corner. The quality of their work, combined with the independence and commitment they are showing, has been truly impressive, and I am incredibly proud of everything they have achieved.

Year 10 have much to look forward to next year and are already making excellent progress, well on their way to reaching the same high standard. Meanwhile, our Key Stage 3 students have been enjoying their exploration of logo design and have recently completed a thought-provoking unit on graffiti, discovering how it can be used to promote messages of peace as well as express political ideas.



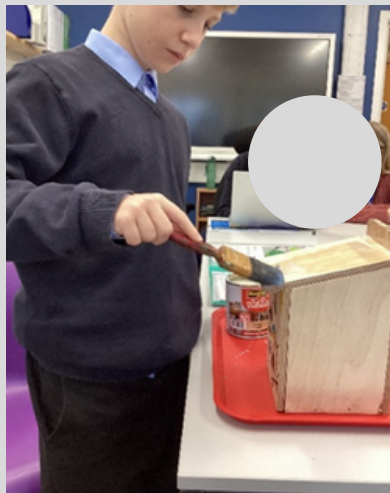
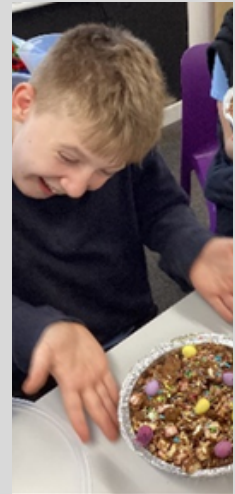
ASDAN

As the days grow brighter and nature begins to bloom, we're excited to share the creative projects and learning experiences that have filled our classrooms this term. Spring is a wonderful time for new beginnings, and our learners have embraced the season with enthusiasm, imagination, and a fantastic sense of teamwork.

This term, we've been busy designing our very own spring gardens—exploring colours, textures, and the life cycle of plants while planning spaces that celebrate growth and creativity. From sketching layouts to selecting flowers and learning what plants need to thrive, our garden projects have encouraged curiosity and hands-on learning.

We've also enjoyed a range of Easter craft activities, where students have had the opportunity to experiment with different materials, develop fine-motor skills, and express their individuality. From decorated eggs to handmade cards and seasonal decorations, their creations have brought a wonderful sense of joy and festivity to our school environment.

We're proud of everything our learners have achieved this term and hope you enjoy reading about their progress and the exciting projects they've been working on



Food Studies

Building Skills, Confidence, and a Love for Cooking

This term in Food Studies, pupils have been diving into the essentials of food hygiene and safety, growing in confidence as they practice key techniques such as knife skills and experimenting with a wide range of seasonal produce. Another key skill the students have learnt is trial and error, it is ok to make mistakes! Our kitchens have been buzzing with energy, creativity, and incredible aromas as students explore new dishes and develop independence in the kitchen. Pupils have particularly enjoyed hands-on tasks that allow them to transform simple, fresh ingredients into impressive meals. From mastering dough textures to stir-frying quickly and safely, students are discovering how rewarding and enjoyable cooking can be.

What We've Been Learning

- ✓ *Food hygiene & safe kitchen practice*
- ✓ *Knife skills – the bridge hold, claw grip, slicing, dicing. Learning French terms for the different knife cuts*
- ✓ *Using seasonal ingredients to maximise flavour and reduce food waste*
 - ✓ *Understanding balanced meals and the importance of nutrition*
 - ✓ *Working confidently with heat, equipment, and new techniques*

One of the recipes we have made this term is below if you wanted to try this at home...

Shortcrust Fruit Pie

Ingredients

200g plain flour

100g cold butter

2–3 tbsp cold water

400g chopped fruit (Apples & Mixed Berries)

3 tbsp sugar

Method

- 1. Rub butter into flour until it resembles breadcrumbs.*
- 2. Add cold water gradually until the dough comes together.*
- 3. Roll out and place into a pie dish.*
- 4. Add fruit and sprinkle with sugar.*
- 5. Add a pastry lid, crimp edges, and cut small steam holes.*
Bake at 180°C for 25–30 mins, until golden.



Geography

Development of Countries · Natural Resources · Research Skills

This spring, our Geography lessons took us through an exciting range of topics, including:

Development of Countries

Within this section we explored how countries grow and change over time, including key factors such as healthcare, education, and economic opportunities. Students have been researching real-world examples to understand global inequalities and development indicators.

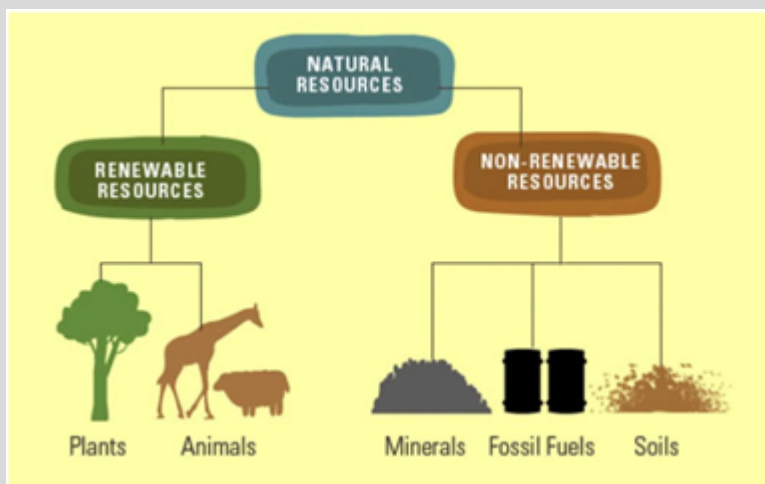
Natural Resources

Learners studied different types of natural resources—renewable and non-renewable—and examined how countries use and manage these resources. Case studies helped illustrate how resource availability can shape a nation's development and environmental impact.



Research Skills

Throughout the term, students practised essential research skills: gathering information, interpreting data, and presenting findings. These skills support both geographical understanding and cross-curricular learning.



Group 1

Group 1 have settled into a new classroom in the cabin building, with new classmates, as well as new class pets (caterpillars that we have been watching transform into butterflies over the term!)

Our two class texts in English were 'The Monster Spotter' and 'The Hodgeheg'. We created and described monster characters, wrote instructions to catch them, and persuaded people to save hedgehogs through writing emotive letters. In Maths, we have been measuring length and perimeter and in Term 2, fractions, using practical equipment and online games to embed basic number facts which will help us throughout our time at school.

In History, we were learning about the Ancient Romans, and more recently about the history of Banbury. We have explored the role of Banbury Canal and Banbury Market, making our own mini market stalls. Our Geography units have helped us to understand how settlements have formed, thinking about what is needed from a place to live (food, shelter, access). We have also explored the countries and capital cities of Europe, linking to our IT topic on databases and facts about countries.

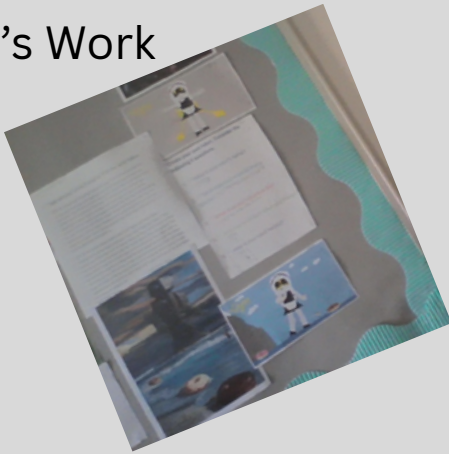
Our Science topics have lent themselves to lots of practical learning. In the first half term we learnt about the life cycles of humans and animals (hence the caterpillar pets!) and next explored appliances, circuits, conductors and insulators in the second half term.

On top of all this, we've learnt skills in Art & Cooking, and explored our talents in weekly Drama lessons. We've enjoyed weekly swimming lessons as well as weekly PE lessons, learning playground games to enjoy over break and lunch times. We are looking forward to the summer term ahead.



Group 2

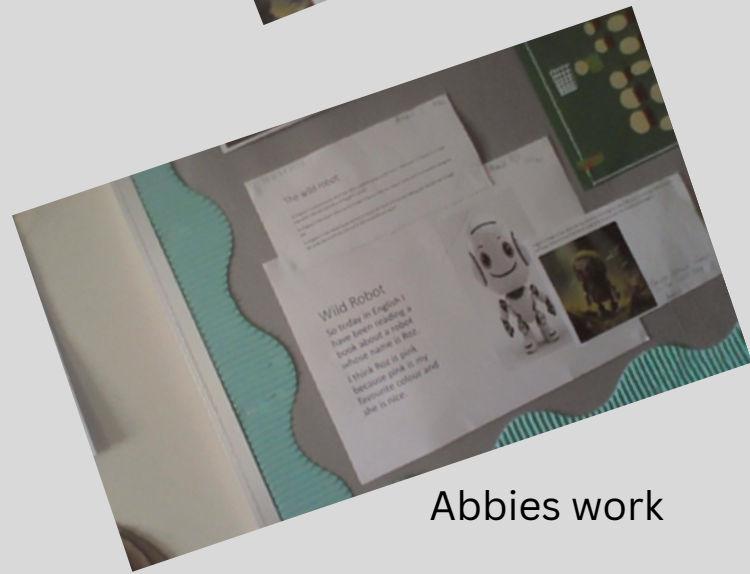
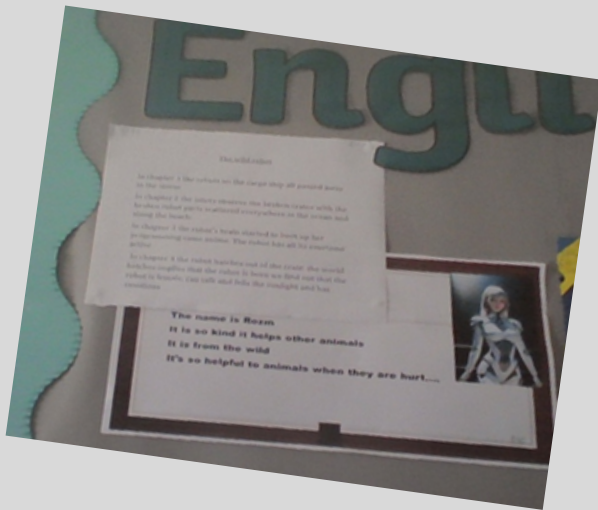
Iris's Work



Jack's work



Darcies work



Abbies work

Our topic last term was based on the book called The Wild Robot and Willow Class had fun creating our own robots using the Paint app. The book gave us opportunity to consider what it means to be alive, and the class gave lovely and insightful responses to this question, deciding that being alive is about what we can feel as well as think. The class retold parts of the story and used cardboard to physically make the robots we created. It was a fun half term, connecting learning with what interests us.



Group 3

This Spring Term has been a busy and productive time for Group 3. Pupils have shown commitment in lessons, enthusiasm in sport, and increasing confidence in their learning. Below are some of the highlights from across the curriculum.



One of the standout experiences this term has been Boxing with Coach Chris. Pupils learned the importance of discipline, focus, and respect while developing coordination and fitness. Many showed real determination to improve their technique week by week. Enrichment Sports Club has also been a highlight, giving pupils the chance to stay active, work as a team, and try different activities in a supportive environment.

Group 3 represented the school in a football match against Newbarn. The team demonstrated strong teamwork and resilience throughout the game. A special mention goes to William Hardiman, who was named Player of the Match for his effort, awareness, and positive attitude on the pitch.



*In English, pupils have engaged thoughtfully with the texts *Wonder* and *The Goldfish Boy*. These stories helped us explore themes such as empathy, friendship, and understanding different perspectives.*

Writing tasks this term have included creating found poetry, producing non-chronological reports, and writing from an alternate perspective. Pupils have worked hard to organise their ideas clearly and develop their vocabulary and sentence structure.

Mathematics

In Maths, Group 3 has focused on key number skills, including fractions, decimals, and percentages. Pupils have also been introduced to ratio and early algebra concepts. They have practiced solving problems step by step and explaining their reasoning, which is an important part of mathematical thinking.

Physical Education

PE lessons have centred on gym and football. Pupils have developed balance, coordination, and teamwork through structured activities and small-sided games. Many have shown increased confidence in their physical skills and willingness to challenge themselves.



Science

In Science, pupils have been learning about materials and their properties. They investigated how materials can be used for different purposes and discussed why certain materials are suitable for specific tasks.

Group 3 also took part in STEM Science Week challenges, where they worked in teams to solve practical problems. These activities encouraged creativity, cooperation, and persistence.



Looking Ahead

We are proud of the progress Group 3 has made this term. Pupils are becoming more independent learners and more confident in sharing their ideas. We look forward to building on this momentum in the next term.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mathematics

Group 12 – GCSE Focus

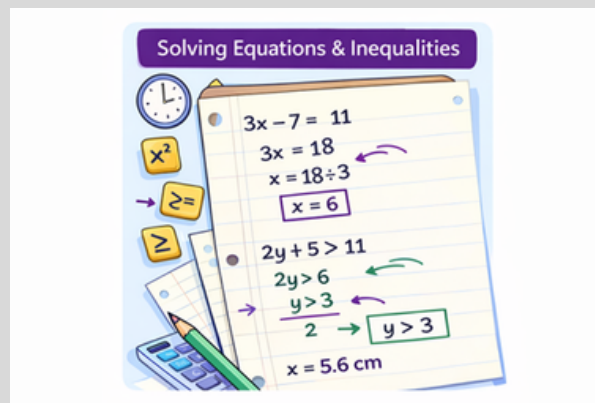
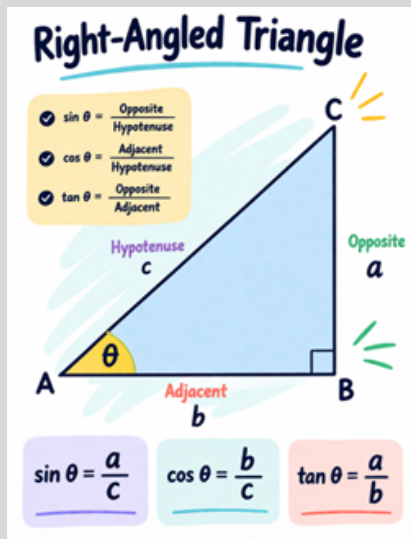
Students have made strong progress in key GCSE topics. A major focus has been trigonometry, applying skills to calculate missing sides and angles in right-angled triangles. They have also worked on:

Solving equations and inequalities

Rearranging formulae for Maths and Science

Simplifying algebraic expressions

Alongside this, students have completed targeted GCSE revision, helping to build confidence and exam readiness.

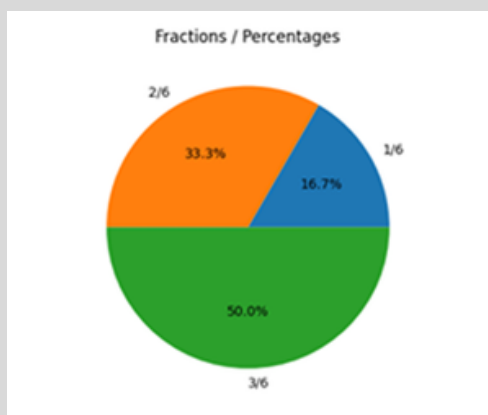


Group 11 – Number Skills

Students have strengthened their understanding of:

Fractions, decimals, and percentages

Converting between forms Applying skills to problem solving



There has been a strong focus on real-life maths, including money and everyday contexts, alongside Functional Skills exam preparation.

Group 10

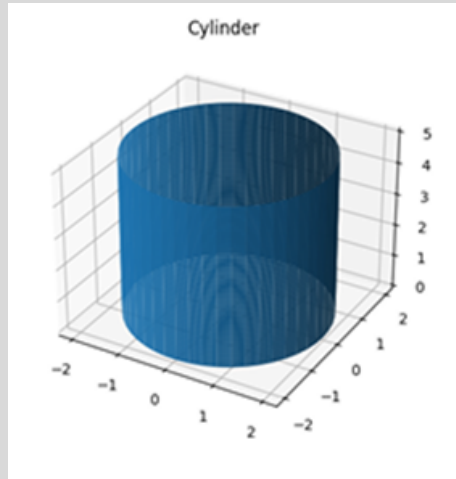
Shape, Space & Probability

Students explored:

Area of 2D shapes, including composite shapes

Surface area and volume of 3D shapes (prisms, cylinders)

They were also introduced to probability, learning how to calculate and interpret outcomes.



Group 6

Data & Functional Skills

Students developed skills in:

Bar charts, line graphs, and dual bar charts

Interpreting and presenting data

They also built confidence with directed numbers and continued working towards their Functional Skills qualification, applying maths to real-life problems.

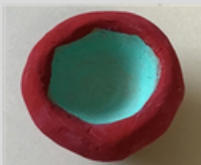
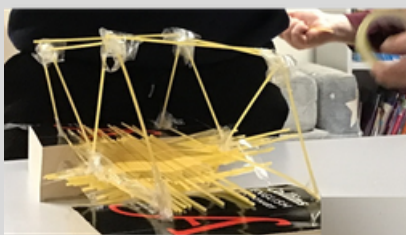


ART GROUP 1 (KS2)

During the term, we explored two main themes. The first theme focused on Designing Products, followed by our second theme, Battling Britons.

In the Designing Products unit, students investigated the history and function of a range of products. They learned about the design process, considering materials, structure, and purpose before moving on to practical construction. Each week, students applied their learning by creating a new product. These included designing their own paper clips, building bridges using spaghetti or Lego, making egg cup holders, and sculpting a monster clay decoration.

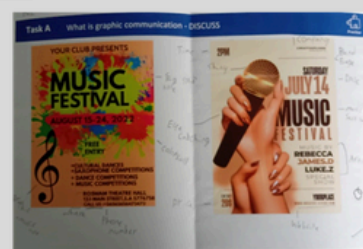
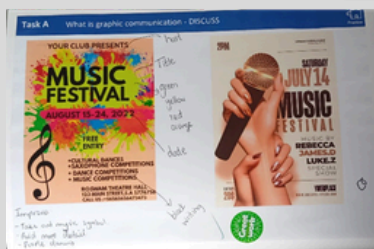
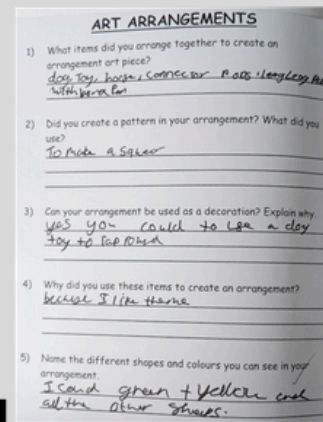
Students then moved on to their second theme, Battling Britons. In this unit, they explored the work of different war artists and examined their artworks in detail. We discussed what the artworks represented and analysed the art elements and principles used by the artists. Using this understanding, students then created their own war-themed artwork using clay, applying both their observational skills and creative techniques.



ART GROUP A2 (KS4)

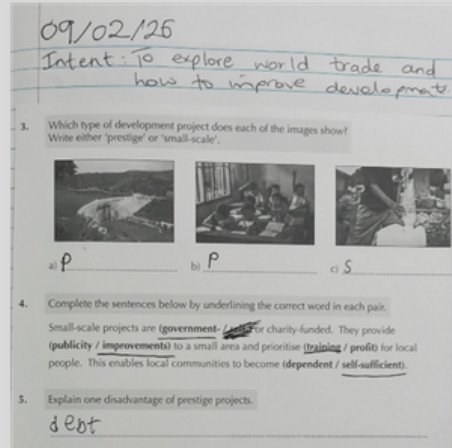
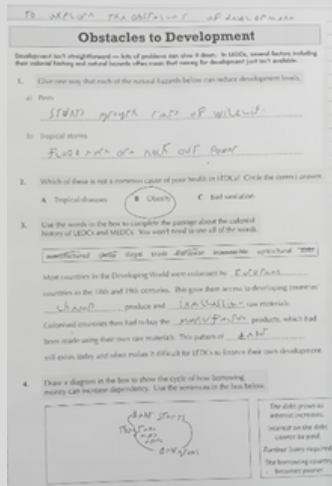
During this term in Art, we explored two themes: Arrangements and Logo Design. In the Arrangements topic, students explored a variety of famous artworks. They analysed and evaluated these pieces, focusing on the art elements and design principles used within each artwork. Students then moved on to creating arrangements using objects found in the classroom. Drawing on the knowledge and skills developed throughout the topic, learners planned and created their own arrangements.

The second topic focused on Logo Design. Students examined what graphic communication involves and how it is used in everyday life. They explored examples of road signs and festival logos, analysing the features they included, their effectiveness, and identifying ways the designs could be improved. Students then applied their learning by designing and creating their own logos, using clear visual communication and purposeful design choices

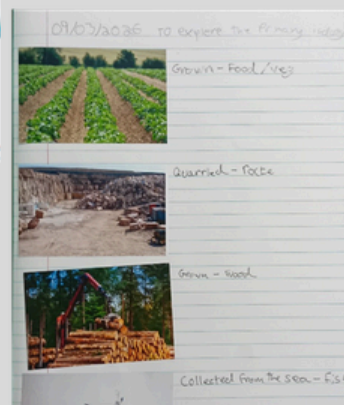


GEOGRAPHY GROUP A1 (KS3)

This term, we studied the Development of countries. We explored development in different parts of the world by comparing more economically developed countries (MEDCs) and less economically developed countries (LEDCs). We then moved on to examining the indicators used to measure a country's level of development. Alongside this, we analysed the different obstacles that can prevent countries from developing. Finally, we investigated what world trade is and why it is important.



After this, we moved on to the theme of Economic Activity and Natural Resources. We explored what economic activity is and how it impacts countries around the world. We also learned about natural resources and how they are used globally. We then studied the primary industry, focusing on how raw materials are obtained, and the secondary industry, looking at how these raw materials are processed and how the two industries are connected.




GEOGRAPHY KS4

This term, we concluded our unit on Tropical Rainforests. We explored how plants and animals adapt to the unique conditions of the rainforest. We examined the importance of rainforests, investigated how they are used, and considered ways in which people can use rainforest resources sustainably. We then moved on to studying Fair Trade, focusing on how it impacts farmers and communities around the world. We also explored renewable and non-renewable energy sources. Finally, students worked on their personal and fieldwork projects, bringing together and applying the different geographical themes they have studied throughout the year

Characteristics of tropical rainforests

Task A: Where are tropical rainforests located?

Describe the distribution of tropical rainforests.



The Equator runs through many tropical rainforests!

This is true as the equator provides a warmer climate for the rainforests.

Laura

Case study - Borneo Tropical Rainforest

Complete this table as you work through the lesson.

Country and continent:	Indonesia Asia
Why is this tropical rainforest important to people?	Home
Reasons for deforestation:	logging, road building
Impacts of deforestation:	soil erosion, habitat loss
How is this rainforest being used sustainably?	Selective logging

Plant and animal adaptations in tropical rainforests

Task A: Why is adaptation important?

Fill in the blanks using the words below.

food tropical light predators habitats adaptations

In the rainforest, plants and animals face many challenges. Through evolution, species have developed special features, known as adaptations, to help them survive. These allow them to cope with threats like sources of food which are hard to access, low light and being hunted by predators. Human activity can change and destroy habitats which is particularly challenging for plants and animals that are closely adapted to them.

Task B: How have animals adapted to the rainforest?

Using examples, describe two adaptations that allow animals to survive challenges of living in the tropical rainforest canopy.

Hint: make sure you say what challenge the adaptation helps with.

I know that sloths live in the canopy layer of the tropical rainforest and that being slow is one of their adaptations for surviving in the canopy.


Green algae - Camo

Long Claws - To help hang

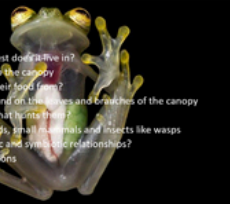
Jacob

Why is the Lumajang district so dangerous to live in?

The Lumajang district is a region located in the East Java province of Indonesia. It is between the Indian and Australian plate boundaries. It may be dangerous to live in due to tectonic activity, earthquakes and volcanic activity as well as the surrounding climate belt. Despite this, it's reasonably safe.



Glass Frog



- What level of rainforest does it live in? From the forest floor to the canopy
- Where do they get their food from? Small invertebrates, found on the leaves and branches of the canopy
- Are they preyed on? What hunts them? Yes, snakes, birds, lizards, small mammal and insectivores like wasps
- What are the parasitic and symbiotic relationships? Frog flies, fungal infections

Obtained from google

Titan Beetle



- The titan beetle is one of the largest insects, and the only one in its genus.
- Lives in tropical rainforests throughout South America
- Live on the forest floor, feeding on the rotting wood which acts as their main source of food
- Females don't have hind wings, emphasizing their cast fly
- They eat most of their food as larvae, the adults must eat a lifetime
- Because of their short lifespan, not much is known about their mating behaviour.

Computing at Park School

Audio & Visual Representations

Students explored how computers capture, store and process different types of media.

Topics included:

- How sound is digitised using sampling rates and bit depth*
 - Representing images using pixels and binary colour values*
 - Understanding colour depth and calculating file sizes*
 - Introduction to image and audio compression techniques*
- Comparing different file formats and their uses*

Mobile App Development

Students designed and built their own mobile apps, putting programming skills into practice.

Topics included:

- UI design principles and thinking about the user
- Event-driven programming and handling user inputs
- Using variables, conditions and loops in app logic
- Building and testing a functional app project

Presenting and evaluating their finished apps

Key Stage 4

Digital Skills

KS4 students deepened their understanding of living and working effectively and safely in a digital world.

Online Safety & Law:

- Cybersecurity threats – phishing, malware, social engineering
- Protecting personal data and digital footprints
- Computer Misuse Act, GDPR and data legislation

Research & Communication:

- Evaluating sources and effective internet research

Collaborative and cloud-based working tools

Productivity & Data:

- Advanced spreadsheet skills – formulae and data modelling
- Presenting and visualising data effectively
- Version control and file management best practices

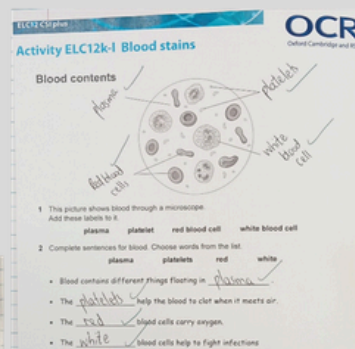
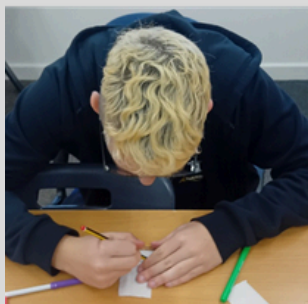
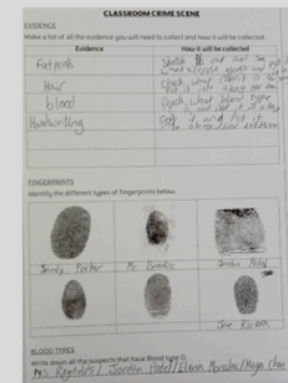
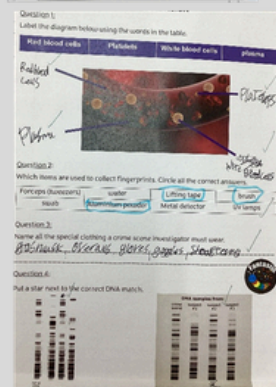
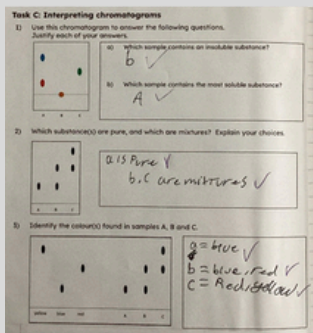
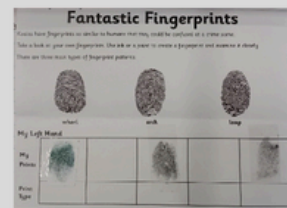
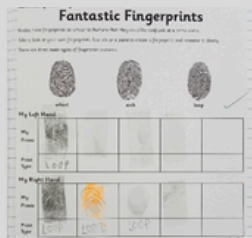
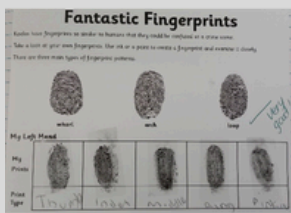
Careers & the Digital World:

- Career pathways and roles in the technology industry
 - Ethical issues in computing and AI
- Preparing for GCSE coursework and controlled assessment

SCIENCE KS4

This term, we explored the topic of Crime Scene Investigations. We learned about the role of a Crime Scene Investigator, how evidence is collected at a crime scene, and why investigators wear specific protective clothing. Students particularly enjoyed carrying out a fingerprint experiment, where they identified and analysed their own fingerprint types. We then explored different blood groups and investigated inks found in pens. Students had great fun conducting a chromatography experiment to compare inks from a range of stationery. We also studied the structure of DNA, analysed different DNA models, and examined DNA profiles, learning how these can be used as evidence in investigations.

Our next topic was The Solar System. We explored the different planets and their distances from the Sun, investigated the Milky Way galaxy, and learned about telescopes used to observe space, including the Hubble Space Telescope and the James Webb Space Telescope. We also examined how light pollution affects astronomical observations and explored the discovery of new planets orbiting other stars.



PE Reflection

This Term in Physical Education Spring 2026

This term, our students have been busy developing a wide range of physical skills, teamwork abilities, and confidence through active participation in PE lessons

Using the Gym - Students learned how to safely and effectively use gym equipment, improving strength, coordination, and overall fitness. They practised balance, core stability, and worked through various stations to build confidence in movement.

Active Games for Primary - Our younger learners participated in energetic games designed to promote teamwork, sharing, turn taking, and fundamental movement skills such as jumping, hopping, throwing, and catching.

Badminton - Students practised racket control, serves, and rallying skills. They learned rules of the game, focusing on accuracy, coordination, and fair play.

Table Tennis - Pupils developed hand eye coordination and control through forehand and backhand strokes, practising rallies and friendly matches to build confidence and skill.

We are proud of the progress all our students have made this term and look forward to more active learning ahead!

KS4 students have been working extremely hard towards their Entry Level and GCSE exams and coursework this term. In particular, the GCSE students were praised highly by an external moderator from the exam board for their attitude, behaviour and commitment during their practical examinations.

Park School V New Barn Football Match

Well done to all KS3 students who represented Park School in a football match against New Barn School. It was a very closely contested game, ending 2-2 at the final whistle, with goals from Rowan and Theo.

The match went into a five-minute golden goal period, where Rowan secured a fantastic victory with a spectacular free kick.

Player of the Match was awarded to Will H for his consistent effort throughout the game, proving to be a valuable member of the team.

A special mention also goes to Leo G and Zach, who supported the team by helping to coach, referee, and mentor the players.

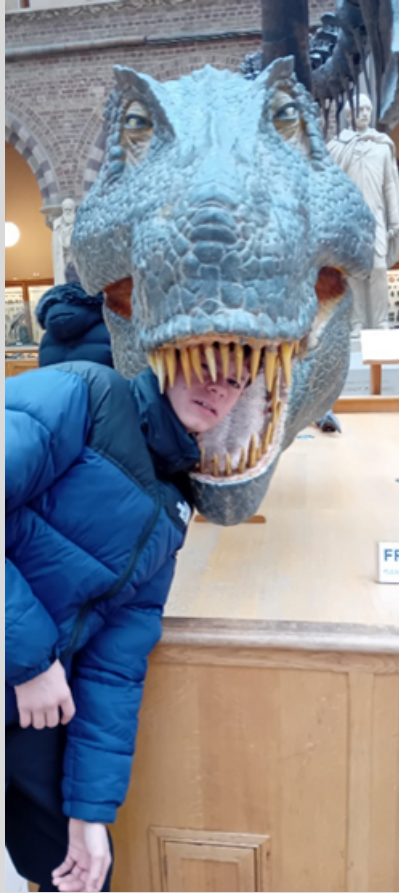
Congratulations to everyone involved –an excellent team effort!



Science

Group 8

This term, Group 8 have focussed on Geology and the Carbon Cycle, and, before that, Adaptations, Natural Selection and Evolution. We enjoyed a great day out at The Museum of Natural History in Oxford, and studied several different case studies that inspired Darwin's Theory of Evolution.



Group 6

This term, Group 6 initially looked at Chemical Reactions, before studying Classification and Variation more recently. We enjoyed completing some exciting investigations as part of the learning and created some excellent classification keys in order to sort different species.



Careers/RSE

Year 7

In Term 3 (Careers), Year 7 looked at the differences between a job and a career and thought about the careers that grabbed their attention. In Term 4 (RSE), we have been thinking about Bullying and Kindness, and How to Stay Safe Online.

Year 8

In Term 3 (Careers), Year 8 looked at Jobs in our Local Community and the Labour Market. In Term 4 (RSE), we have been thinking about Identity, Stereotypes and Equality, and Online Life and Social Media.

Year 9

In Term 3 (Careers), Year 9 looked at CV writing and job applications. In Term 4 (RSE), we have been thinking about Online Sexual Risks and the laws around it, and Pornography and Media Influences.

Year 10

In Term 3 (Careers), Year 10 looked at CV writing and job applications. In Term 4 (RSE), we have been thinking about Contraception, Pregnancy, STI's and Sexual Health.

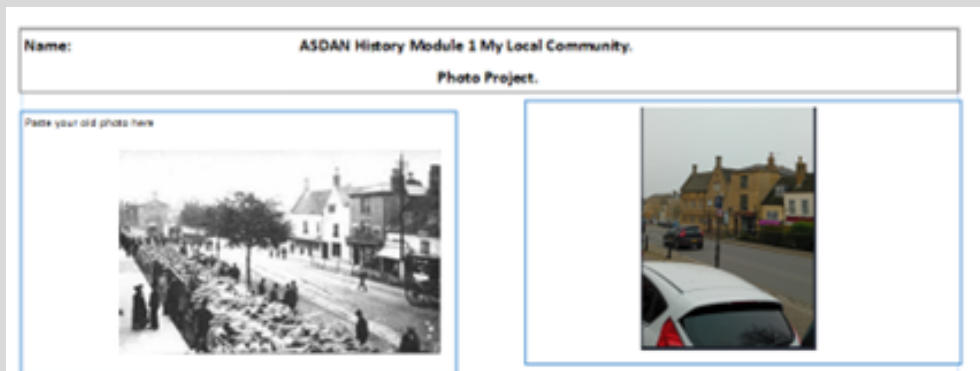
Year 11

In Term 3 (Careers), Year 11 looked at CV writing and job applications. In Term 4 (RSE), we have been thinking about Power, Gender and Sexual Ethics, and Digital Risk and Responsibility.

Group A1 & A2 History and IT

In History this term, group A2 have continued to investigate and research the history of their local area. Highlights have been trips to the local cemetery in Shipton-Under-Wychwood where we found war memorial graves and hunted for the graves of the youngest and oldest people buried there. We also found old pictures of Chipping Norton and then visited the town where we then staged the original pictures looking for similarities and changes over time.

Class A1 have enjoyed learning about the interwar periods from 1919-1938. This time was marked by big changes, including new inventions, social shifts, and countries trying to recover from the war. We explored how people's daily lives were affected by unemployment, new technologies, and political tensions. We also learned how these events eventually helped lead to the start of World War II.



In IT, A2 and A1 have been developing and perfecting their basic computer skills, following the OCR Functional Skills Qualification. We have been honing our word processing and picture formatting skills and have been using Microsoft Outlook to improve our e-mail skills ready for the world of work.

World Book Day (March)

Students enjoyed celebrating reading on World Book Day in March. We held a book 'swap shop' and guest reader slots during the day, where students were able to hear different adults read their favourite stories aloud. All students were given the World Book Day tokens to exchange for free books.



British Science Week (March)

Students took part in Science challenges over British Science Week, working to build cardboard boats, balloon powered cars, paper helicopters, and creating 'gloop' with cornflour to explore the properties of this liquid.



Toby Time

Welcome Spring!

This term I have very much enjoyed the nicer weather so that I can be outside with my classmates chewing sticks and chasing tennis balls. I love sniffing the dandelions and nibbling the tulips, although mum isn't so much of a fan when I destroy her flower beds.

Lise has insisted that I wear a school uniform and had a special bandana made for me. I don't mind wearing it as I think I look rather dapper. I am getting lots of compliments! What do you think?

