



Headteacher's Message

Dear all,



I can't quite believe that we are here again, celebrating a super term at The Pines and getting ready to welcome in 2024!

This term we have welcomed lots of new pupils and staff to the Pines. They have all settled in so well and it is lovely to see the progress that the children make. All of the children in the school (280 now!) are a delight and it is so rewarding to see the ways in which they grow, develop and thrive in school. It is a pleasure to get to know the children and watch their journey's with us. I am honestly so proud of each and every pupil in school, the run up to the Christmas period really demonstrates this, where we see pupils perform in the Christmas shows, or welcome their parents in to an afternoon of holiday crafts, with confidence and enthusiasm.

Last week we held an awards evening where we welcomed back last year's year 11 pupils, to collect their awards and GCSEs. They are all very happy and settled in their new settings and doing really well. We were amazed and proud of all of them for achieving all of the qualifications and accreditations that they were entered in for. We really do miss the pupils when they leave us as they all become such a big part of the Pines family.



THE
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NEWSLETTER

As always, I would like to thank all of the staff, for their hard work, commitment to the Pines and the children, it really is something very special and that makes The Pines the amazing school that it is. I am sure you join me in wishing them a happy and relaxing holiday.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your ongoing support this term be it attending parent's groups, or supporting fundraising ventures such as the amazing Monsters Ball that raised £1505.

Wishing you all a very happy holiday and a prosperous New Year. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you in 2024.

Emma Pearce



WEDNESDAY 31ST JANUARY 2024 - TEACHER TRAINING DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS



Let's see what our classes have been up to this term....

Early Years Department



Caterpillars Class



Caterpillars have had an amazing first term at the Pines. We have all settled well into our new classroom and our routines. We have had lots of fun learning and exploring through our topics 'All about me' and 'Colours Everywhere'. There have been lots of fun activities linked to our topics; we have made pictures of ourselves using paint, collage and using the interactive whiteboard. We have used lots of colours through crafts and matched and sorted colours. We have enjoyed lots of sensory exploration too. This half term we started our first sensory food group sessions where we were amazing at touching and trying new foods.



Since starting school we have enjoyed exploring Forest School, especially the hammocks, swings and water play.



We have also enjoyed going out on the minibus to Melbick's Garden Centre, shopping at ASDA and we love going to the park. We are now getting ready for our Christmas stay and play where we sing songs.



Primary Department



1B Class

It has been a very busy autumn term in 1B. This term 1B have been learning about and exploring the topics 'Me And My Senses' and 'Come And Play'. As part of our topics we have completed many 1:1 activities and have enjoyed accessing our learning environment through explore and learn. We have been focusing on developing our play and exploration skills, and developing our awareness of our classroom rules and routines. We have all settled into class really well and love sensory and messy play activities. 1B have also began to develop early awareness of number and shape by completing a range of activities including listening to a range of number songs and exploring number and shapes through art and sensory based activities. In English, we have been working on mark making using a range of different writing tools and using our hands when making marks in sensory materials. Within our other subjects, we have been exploring different materials and playing with toys made of different materials (both old and new). We have also been working on tolerating peers within our learning space and sharing and taking turns with support.



1W Class 🌲🌲🌲

This term, our topics have been 'Me and My Senses' and 'Come and Play'. The children have all settled really well into Class 1W and had a super term, forming new friendships and learning lots of exciting things.

In the first half term, we printed portraits of ourselves and explored our senses by tasting and touching new things. We had weekly sensory food sessions where we touched, kissed and ate green, orange, round and stick shaped food. We listened to lots of stories and rhymes about people and animals such as 'Wow Said the Owl.' We named our body parts for science and really enjoyed looking to see what colour hair, eyes and skin we and our friends have.

This term, we have been reading and acting out the story of Shark in the Park. We have also looked at an information book about Toys Around the World. We found out that many of the toys that children play with in different countries are just like our toys. Everyone loves to hug a bear! In Science, we have been investigating different materials and sorting objects into those which are rough and smooth or shiny and dull. We have even made our own play dough!

We had a fantastic trip to Melbicks Garden Centre to look at the Christmas decorations and the Aquarium. We also went to McDonalds for lunch.

1W have been amazing and the staff team are so proud! Well done 1W!



1R Class 

For our first term in 1R, we have covered the topics:

- Our Senses
- Come and Play

Across all of our subjects, we have been practicing our writing and reading skills in English. Exploring our counting skills, measuring skills and time in Maths. In Science, we have looked at Animals including Humans and Materials. We have also discovered old toys in History and our local area within school for Geography. In PSHE we have looked at Being me in My World and Celebrating differences. We have celebrated Halloween, Children in Need, Remembrance day, Anti-bullying week, and shortly we will be celebrating Christmas.



THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

1S Class

What a busy start to the school year we've had! We started the term by reading the story of 'Goose Goes to School'. We looked at our environment- which was brand new to some of us! We climbed right to the top of the school which gave us a fabulous view and we have loved being out in the forest. We have even managed to have a real fire out there which we cooked pizzas on! Yummy!

We have been exploring all things autumnal- looking at the ever changing colours of the leaves and most recently we have looked at everything that's evergreen- just in time to prepare us for the festive season!

More recently we have looked at the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' and looked at all things sparkly and shiny! We extended this by looking at all things under the sea and noticed that some of the creatures we were exploring looked very different to us! We adored looking at their environment too- all that colourful coral was fabulous!

In History we have looked at pirates- in particular, Blackbeard! We found out he was married 14 times which meant we had to decorate a lot of rings for his wives! We have loved 'sailing' on ships and loved swashing and swishing forwards and backwards and up and down when singing 'Over The Deep Blue Sea'.

In Maths we have looked at shape and money and had lots of fun creating patterns and structures with shapes. We have built towers using 3D shapes- discovering that some worked better than others. We've tried hard to match and rotate Numicon shapes and decorated Christmas trees using Numicon pegs and cotton reels!

We are almost ready to break up and have lots of festive fun!



2R Class

2R have had a wonderful first term back and have all settled into their new class with new pupils and staff getting to know each other well. The children have enjoyed and engaged well with their topics this term. During 2R's topic 'All Things Magic' some of the children had the opportunity to learn about Harry Houdini, explored the poem 'Pickety Witch' and read the story 'Doodling Daniel'. 2R also explored the topic 'Once Upon a Time' where they listened to the Cinderella story, The Day the Crayons Quit and Mother Gooses action rhymes.

For our Science lessons 2R have been developing their understanding of light, and magnets and forces. During our light topic the children explored shadows and making shadow puppets and during magnets and forces topic the children explored what materials are magnetic and how toy cars travel along different surfaces. They have been developing their understanding of making predictions and performing simple tests.

2R have been working on their designing skills in DT and designed their own witch's hat and wand following their own design briefs and have explored printing uses various techniques in art. 2R learned about the UK in Geography and developed their understanding of different environments and landscapes that form the UK. In History 2R have explored learning all about the Anglo Saxon and had the opportunity to go into the immersive classroom and enjoyed exploring what an Anglo-Saxon Village was like and how they lived.

2R took part in Children in Need and had a fantastic day coming into school in their own clothes and raising money and completing a range of activities throughout the day. It was also Anti-Bullying week this term and 2R explored different ways we can be kind to one another and what they can do to help prevent bullying.



2F Class 

This term we have covered:

English – Stories = Mixed, Malala’s Magic Pencil, A Bear called Paddington and Elizabeth II, the Queen Who Lived to Serve. We have also begun to look at poetry and continued to develop our handwriting skills. The children are learning phonics to help them with their reading.

Maths – Number = addition and subtraction (to 10 and beyond), Number bonds for 10 and 20, and how to count in groups of 2s, 5s and 10s. Also, in shape and measures we have been learning to find a half of a number/shape and how to recognise and count money.

Science – Chemistry = experiments looking at molecules and how different substances react to heat. We also discussed the water cycle. Biology = how to identify and group different animals like insects and vertebrates.

We have also played group games in PE, learned some Makaton, talked about major faith events in RE, explored emotions in PSHE, learned about the Romans in History and compared the British Isles with Poland in Geography. Art and Design topics have included still life drawing and making gingerbread glove puppets!



2S Class 

2S have settled in really well in class and have had the time to get to know one another. We enjoy exploring practical activities and learning through group tasks and play.

This term we have been learning about topics ‘All Things Magic’ some of the children had the opportunity to learn about Harry Houdini, explored the poem Pickety Witch and read the story Doodling Daniel. We also covered the topic ‘Once upon a time’ where they listened to the Cinderella story, The Day the Crayons Quit and Mother Gooses action rhymes. In Maths we have been learning about ‘Time’ where we have sequenced days of the week, months of the year and day and night

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

routines. In Science we have been learning and exploring 'magnets and forces' through different strategies such as using paper pins under paper plates and mark making using paint, alongside this we have explored forces using paint and cars on paper to explore whether all cars go fast or slow. We have enjoyed dressing up as Anglo Saxons as part of our History theme for this term. In PE we have been exploring dance to different types of music using rhythmic dances.

2S have participated in Children in Need and odd socks day, dressing in their own clothing, money donations, and participating in a variety of activities. This term, there was also a week dedicated to Anti-Bullying, and 2S learned about many ways to show kindness to one another as well as preventing bullying, this was also a topic covered in our PSHE lessons. We have enjoyed making poppies dedicated to Remembrance Day.

We have also completed lots of 1:1 activities and learning through explore and learn, accessing a variety of activities.

Here are some pictures of us!





2W Class

Hi there from 2W.

We have had an exciting first term and have been exploring working together more. We have experienced lots of different activities together, such as Drama, Music and even tidying up! You should be very proud of us.

We have had some lovely sessions in the Forest School, and we even had the fire pit.

Hope you all have enjoyed the pictures, and we look forward to another amazing term in 2024.



2M Class 

We have settled well in our new class and have working very hard, this term.

English

Our first topic in English was Dinosaurs. We enjoyed listening to the story ‘Goldilocks and The Three Dinosaurs’ and exploring different dinosaurs in the non-fiction text ‘3D Dinosaurs’. In Explore and Learn, we enjoyed lots of imaginative play with dinosaurs, making marks in different sensory materials, using tweezers, scoopers and scissors to save the dinosaurs, practicing our letter formation and sorting our phonic sounds.

This term, our topic has been ‘Come Dine with Me’. We have enjoyed listening to the story ‘The Disgusting Sandwich’ and creating our own disgusting sandwiches. We then used symbols to describe our sandwiches or write our own disgusting sandwich. We have also been learning about instructions and used symbols or PECS to make our own sandwiches. We then used sequenced symbols to create a recipe. To continue the sandwich fun, we have also used a choice of symbols to create our own poem based upon Tony Bradman’s ‘The Sandwich’.

Maths

In Maths, we continue to develop our Number skills. In Explore and Learn we have enjoyed using different sensory materials to practice our number formation. We have also enjoyed exploring Numicon and practicing our counting and addition skills in a range of different activities.



We have also been learning about the time. We have enjoyed listening and joining in with different rhymes about the time, ordering our daily routine and sorting activities into the day, evening and night time. We had lots of fun exploring clocks, making paper plate clocks, matching Numicon to the clock and having a go at different time jigsaws. We have also enjoyed exploring different sensory mediums to explore capacity and ‘empty’ and ‘full’.



2P Class 

2P came back to school in September and got straight to work on our 'We are all different' topic. The children enjoyed exploring different skin tones, hair and eye colour, looking at how we are all different, and making their own faces, using lots of different materials. In Science lessons, we explored water in it's different states, enjoying lots of water play, water and ice painting, ice excavation activities, looking at water we can make with water, such as squash and hot chocolate. In Autumn 2, 2P have been looking at 'The Great Outdoors.' We have been on lots of outings, visiting different parks and farms, exploring outdoor environments. In the classroom, the children have explored camping and forest themed sensory play and camping role play. The children love going inside the tent and getting in the sleeping bags.

2P have also enjoyed activities looking at all the celebrations and special occasions that take place this time of year – Halloween, Bonfire Night, Diwali, Remembrance Day and – of course – Christmas!





2C Class



What a busy autumn term it has been in 2C. In the first part of the term, our topic was dinosaurs! We read the book *'Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs'* and lots of fact books about dinosaurs. We all went on a trip to West Midlands Safari Park, where we had a guided tour of the Dinosaur Park. We also drove around to look at the animals. This helped with our understanding of animals in their habitats. In Art, we looked at the artwork of Nick Walker and Banksy. We made prints of dinosaur fossils and prints displaying a positive message that was inspired by the artist. We also had the opportunity to attend Forest School with Sami. We used the campfire to cook, we used the new swings and had lots of lovely dinosaur inspired activities. The hammocks were a big hit too!

In the second half of the term, we have been looking at food in our topic *'Come Dine with Me'*. We started the term with someone leaving a disgusting sandwich on my desk! I think it may have been the badger from our class text, *'The Disgusting Sandwich'*. The children really enjoyed this book and thought it was hilarious. We were also looking at recipes from around the world. We made different food like Bangladeshi bread and salad. The children were fantastic at measuring and using the equipment carefully and correctly. Maybe we have some chefs in the making!

We were also busy getting ready for our Christmas production of Stickman. The children were very excited and loved acting out Stickman. In Design and Technology, the children had been designing and making their own light up Christmas decoration. They used their knowledge of electrical circuits from last year to help them build their design.

What a busy term we have had! We are very much looking forward to the spring term!



2H Class



2H have settled in superbly well this year! This term we have been working on our key texts linked to the great outdoors; Pete the cat goes camping, My London alphabet and London's burning. Our writing focus has included catalogue style writing, writing postcards and sequencing. We have really enjoyed experiencing camping and the city of London through sensory experiences. Our favourite experiences have certainly been making s'mores and enjoying some fish and chips!

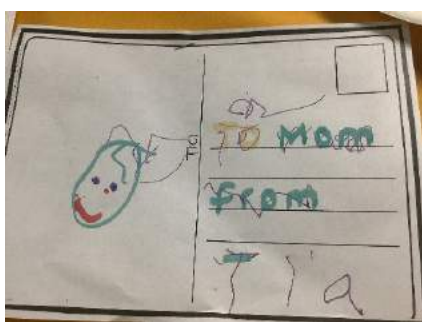
During our Numeracy sessions we have been looking at numbers; some of us have been learning to accurately count sets to 5, others have been learning to count the total of two amounts, while some pupils have been working on joining in with number songs with actions. For shape, space and measure, some of the pupils have been working on capacity; learning to identify full and empty, others have been sorting items according to criteria while some pupils have been matching items according to shape or size.

Our focus for Science has been living things. Some of the children have explored the various animals that belong to different habitats such as the farm, jungle, sea and safari. While others have been matching or sorting the animals according to their habitat.

In DT we have been working on our cooking skills! We always enjoy handling foods, and this term we have made different foods related to our topics, for example making minibeast cookies, polish fruit soup and no bake cheesecakes.

Our topic in Geography has been Poland. We have used different arts and craft tools to make the Polish flag and re-create Polish folk art. We have also experienced Polish music and explored various Polish snacks such as the prince polo classic chocolate bar, paluszki and paczki.

In PSHE we have been celebrating our differences. We have explored how we are all unique for example making different skin tone prints. With support we have identified good and bad behaviours and some of the children were really good at sorting good from bad every day behaviours! We also explored the idea of friendship by learning to share preferred activities with peers, taking turn in table top games and making sweet treats to share with the class. Likewise, in RE, we have looked at Diwali. The children enjoyed making their own diva lamps, decorating rangoli patterns, and tasting different sweet and savory foods that would be eaten during the festival of light, such as samosas, pakoras, rice, chutney and gulab jaman. Well done to all the pupils in 2H- you have all worked super hard.



2B Class

This term in class 2B we have been exploring the topics Dinosaurs and Come Dine with Me. We have explored our local community this term by visiting our school allotment, going to the park, visiting Manor Farm Fruits for their Pumpkin Fest event and Chase Farm Café. In Maths this term, we have been learning about number, time and position, such as, in, on, under and beside. Our favourite book in English this term has to be The Disgusting Sandwich. The children had lots of fun creating their own sandwich using some unusual ingredients, such as, chocolate spread and sweets. In Science, we have been exploring fossils and forces. This half-term we have been exploring push and pull forces. We enjoyed exploring cars and creating patterns in paint by pushing and pulling the cars forwards and backwards. The children also explored objects around school that need a push or pull force. In Geography, we explored coasts and labelled different coastal features. In History, we have been learning about Queen Victoria and the important events in her reign. In Art and Design, we have been creating prints and patterns and enjoyed using dinosaur stamps to create our own repeating patterns. In PE, the children have been exploring gymnastics and copying simple actions and dancing to different types of music. In Music, we have been exploring sounds that can be made with different parts of our body, such as, our hands, mouth and feet. We also had lots of fun taking part in an African drumming workshop that took place earlier this term. In, PSHE, we have been learning about friendships and families. For anti-bullying week we made a friendship wreath and explored what makes a good friend.

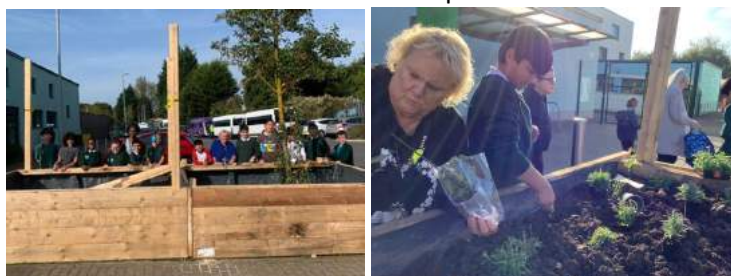


THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

2D Class

Hi there from 2D.

We have had an amazing first term together. A new academic year, a new class. So we needed to set about making it ours. As the year 5 / 6 class we have started with a leaving your mark project, by building a large planter at the front of school and started to plan for Forest School 2.



We planted some planters up in class with a wide variety of succulent plants, to make our class a more pleasant environment.



Academically we have worked on a range of topics from around the world, light and the ancient Greeks. In science we have covered Light and Our bodies. In Maths we have learnt more about number, fractions, money and time. Our texts in English have been Great cities, Winnie and Wilbur around the world, poems from around the world, Simon sock, and the ant explorer. We started swimming lessons way back in September and now in December all our skills have improved immensely.





THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

We represented the school in a Panathlon competition at the University of Birmingham. This is a multi-alternative sports events. There were ten schools competing and we came in at 4th place. Very proud of our class.



As part of our RE lessons we visited St Martins Church, who welcomed us with drinks and lots of information about the church.



We celebrated six birthdays this term. Amirs, Georges, Mikhails Jacksons, Zakkis and Ishaqs.

We have taken part in Odd socks day, Children in Need and No Pens day fund raising campaigns.



A massive well done to 2D, you have all worked incredibly hard this term. We look forward to another amazing term in 2024. Mr Hadley, Mrs Millman and Debbie.



Secondary Department



3C Class

What a start to the year we have had in 3C. Our topic for the first half term was 'Wild At Heart' where we read 'We're Going on a Lion Hunt'. We settled into new routines in secondary. We have welcomed 2 new class members to 3C and are super proud about how they have settled in. In Art we explored Picasso's cubism before getting our hands messy and creating our own cubist pieces.

In Science we looked at bodily functions such as breathing, eating and how the heart changes when we exercise. We got to explore this through some fun practical activities such as how many candles we could blow out. In RE we have thought about Islam and taken part in some very calming reflective exercises. Towards the end of the half term we got to go to the African drumming session. We loved it, and can't wait for another go next year!

In the second half term our topic changed to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. This was perfect because we also got to use Forest School. It's safe to say 3C love exploring the outdoors from painting trees, sorting recycling items and enjoying the hammocks!

In English we started the half term by reading 'Somebody swallowed Stanley' (check out our book reviews if you'd like to know what we thought!)

Our Geography topic was India so we rolled out sleeves up and cooked some different Indian foods such as a Halal Chicken Tikka Masala. In art we created collages of Indian flag out of recycled paper we collected around school.

We started Maths off by looking at measurement (a great excuse to recycle some bottles and think about full and empty). We moved on to think about shapes, 2D and 3D. In PE our focus was dance, where we used different items such as ribbons, parachutes, and pom poms to explore artistic dance. In IT we've enjoyed thinking about how we control technology, from remote control cars and robots, to iPad's, and the immersive room.



3M Class

3M have had a fantastic start to Year 7! We have all got to know each other and have all been working hard. In English, we have been reading the book 'Someone Swallowed Stanley' and have been reading about recycling. In Science lessons we have been learning about materials and their uses which linked really well to our English lessons. It hasn't just been about working hard, we have had loads of fun too! We have all loved cooking every fortnight and have had a chance to cook and taste a lot of savoury and sweet treats. We have even been on a trip to go bowling and then to McDonalds which we all really enjoyed. We are all looking forward to next term and the possibility of more visits!

3V Class

3V have been working so hard this term. The staff in 3V have been immensely impressed with their motivation towards the lessons and learning and with their overall behaviour and attitude. Would you like to know what we have done? Ok, so here goes!

Our theme for this term has been **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**.

In English we have been reading a really interesting book called Scavengers by Darren Simpson. We have also been learning about and writing about Greta Thunberg who is a Swedish environmental activist.



In History we have been learning about the Elizabethan Era and we made a ruff to wear – just like the ones worn by the nobility in Elizabethan times. Shakespeare wore one too and we enjoyed reciting some of his most famous quotes.



THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

In Geography we had the opportunity to taste foods that we had never tried before from India. This is because our topic this term was India. This was such a great experience. It was fascinating too to learn about the culture and traditions of this country.

In Design and Technology, we made a windmill and bird feeders using recycled materials and in Art we have done some artwork using images cut out from magazines and leaflets. The focus for our art work was abstract art which communicates through lines, shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks.



On No Pens Day on Wednesday 29th November, we did lots of activities where we were not allowed to use a pen or a pencil. We talked a lot and found out things about our friends and peers that we didn't know before. Even the staff told us about themselves.



During this term, we went on two trips. The first one was to Longwill School for the Deaf. We visited their Christmas Fair and were able to purchase things from the stalls. This taught us how to handle our own money and be responsible. We also went to the German Christmas Market in Birmingham and had so much fun going on the carousel and having a delicious hot chocolate drink. It was all very Christmassy.



3F Class

A busy term for 3F with both work and play. Throughout our lessons we have been learning about a variety of different subjects within our class. In Maths we started off with fractions and statistics during the first half term. We then moved on to time and money which we much preferred and loved learning about, after all, money makes the world go round! In English we read a number of different text which included Kensuke's Kingdom, Chinese Cinderella and Jabber Wocky. During these lessons we learnt and perfected a number of different English devices such as detailed setting descriptions, character descriptions, instruction writing and making up alternative writing for books already written. In Science we learnt about the reproductive system and health in our first term, moving onto the periodic table and Chemistry in term 2. However, our favourite lessons are definitely the creative side of the curriculum. Such as Food and Nutrition were we have cooked and enjoyed a number of dishes like pumpkin soup and savory scones. During the theory part of the lesson we have been studying fats, proteins, carbohydrates, fibre and certain vitamins. We have also studied food hygiene and safety. We have had a couple of visitors this term including Loudmouth Theatre Company who spoke to us about about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying and the impact of bullying). What our responsibilities are as bystanders and how to report bullying to an appropriate adult. How stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage to other people's mental health. What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. Also they talked to us about online risks and how to identify harmful behaviours (including online bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support. For Black History month we had Nick Ledbury perform an Africa drumming workshop. We worked hard grasping the complex rhythms and different beats made within drumming from the region. We found this session so much fun as well as being educational. The drum circle created an atmosphere which both fascinated us and kept us engaged the whole hour. The session was finished off with a 'drum off' with 3M. Personally we think we won but Nick did say it was a draw.



3Z Class

The year is over and what a term it's been! In our class we've had the chance to reinforce old knowledge and also work on new skills. For English, we've had the opportunity to look at new stories including the much loved "Colour Monster". This has helped develop our reading comprehension, listening skills and even helped elicit opportunities for independent writing. For Maths, we've continued working on number and shape, but also had opportunities to look at new topics with more depth. For instance, when looking at 3D shapes we've learnt about their different characteristics and how they relate to the world around us.

Likewise, for our Science and Creative curriculum we've had fun exploring a variety of topics. Whether it's been learning about religion or seeing how different materials react, 3Z have worked really hard to understand their wider environment. Let's hope our next term is as good as this one!



3R Class

3R have had a very busy Autumn term.

In English we looked at Tad, a story about lifecycles, we also looked at lifecycle information posters. We created our own leaflets on paper and on the computer. We enjoyed the story 'WE'RE GOING TO FIND THE MONSTER!' We couldn't wait to find out who the monster was. We looked at setting descriptions. We made an origami cat, dog and fish whilst writing our own instructions.

In Maths we worked on fractions, statistics, time and money. In Science we looked at reproduction and learnt the scientific names for body parts. We have also been looking at chemical reactions. In



Geography we looked at the water cycle in more detail and map skills, including compass points. We watched Horrible History Videos about the Vikings and researched the Industrial Revolution. In Art we created our own interpretations of The Green Man.

For DT we made bird houses and bug hotels in Forest School with help from the amazing Sami and we are currently creating our own Material Monsters and working on our sewing skills. We have cooked lots of lovely food including parmentier potatoes, cinnamon and chocolate swirls, remembrance cookies, waffles and pancakes.



3L Class

3L have done amazing this half term. In English we have been following our key texts which was, "The Lion inside". In these lessons we have written some brilliant character descriptions to describe the two main characters and the setting. We have also been working on some poetry in the last week doing "list poems". The children have written some lovely list poems about different Christmas characters.

In Maths we have focused on multiplication and division. We also learnt a new mathematical word "inverse". In the lessons on multiplication we used cubes and drew the multiplication arrays to help us answer the questions. Then in our focus week we looked at "measurement", where we did a range of different things from exploring both mass and length. Looking at measuring things and comparing the lengths and mass of objects.

In Science we have been doing Chemistry and focusing more specifically on acids and alkalines. The class really enjoyed going in the science room and doing experiments to work out whether a liquid was an acid, alkaline or neutral by using a pH scale. The class have also looked at being able to identify different hazard symbols in the environment.

One of our favourite lessons this half term has been Geography. We have been learning all about China. The class can now tell you where it is in the world and what continent it is in, what the surrounding countries are, about the different settlements, the climate zones and name some of the cities in China. But our favourite lesson so far was exploring the Chinese cuisine and tasting a range of traditional dishes.

A massive well done for all the children in 3L you have all worked incredibly hard this term.

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



3K Class

3K have had a great first term. We've been out on visits including one to the canal to look at locks and how the canals helped to take goods from Birmingham across the country and then throughout the world. We've worked hard on our Music and written the lyrics for a 12 Bar Blues song that we've performed using voices, signing and instruments. In art we've looked at sculpture and Pop Art – lots of fun! In DT we've designed and made our own clocks which look fantastic, and in Food Tech we've been trying out foods they can cook themselves. In Geography we've looked at travelling and included some role play of going on a plane and used the new Immersive room to look at China. Science has been fun and we've looked at our lungs and how we breathe and now we're looking at hazards.

It's been a long term, but what a fantastic class to spend it with!

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



3W Class

It's nearly the end of another year and with the sound of sleigh bells sounding faintly on the horizon, it's time to have a look back over what our class has been up to since September. Hopefully nothing naughty and everything nice!

In November we started our weekly work experience visits to Tesco. Kelsey, their Community Champion, takes us to the meeting room and lets us know what our jobs for that morning are. We've 'rumbled', decorated Gingerbread people, and found out about different jobs people do. The class have also been serving each other on a till, though no payments were made or change given! When possible they have used self-checkout tills which is great for their confidence and Maths skills. We'll also be going to another store to find out what it's like to work there.

Every other week we practice our cooking skills and have made a variety of foods both sweet and savory. Some were better received than others but fair to say that the chocolate chip muffins went down well.

We also had a drumming workshop which was noisy but fun and enjoyed trying out some Chinese food on No Pens Day. In P.E. the class are beginning to learn some Circus skills, though this does not include high wire or plate spinning!

By the time you will have read this we will also have been to the Frankfurt German Market where we will have seen some lovely sights and been treated to hot chocolate and a Carousel ride by the generous people there.

Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.



Using the self-service till.



With Kelsey in Tesco's Meeting Room



No Pens Day



Cooking!

4H Class

4H have worked extremely hard this term across all subject areas. In English we focused on a story 'growing up' where we explored the ages from 0 – 5 and enjoyed experiencing a variety of activities related to the different ages. In Maths, we have continued to develop our number and geometry skills through using concrete objects, pictorial representations and solving number problems. We are all completing our independent learning trays in English and Maths with confidence. Within ASDAN, we have developed key skills within decision making, problem solving and working with others in relevant

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

day –to day scenarios. We also looked in detail at our roles and responsibilities within different contexts such as home, school and wider community. In PE, we have had lots of fun playing Kurling and taking part in a variety of different dance routines, Waka- Waka was one of our favourites! In Art we have looked at artists in detail, so far we have observed the work of Picasso and Kandinsky and tried to re-create similar artwork! Each week we take part in a number of Theralympics and TAC-PAC sessions. We completed lots of different activities for Children in Need and Anti-Bullying Week. Within our Drama sessions from the Hippodrome, we have incorporated our ASDAN work by focusing on job roles, each week we have a jobs disco, this is so much fun! We are looking forward to the Christmas festivities throughout December.



4A Class

In 4A we have all been working super hard this term. We have been doing a lot of work towards our ASDAN award.

In our Cooking lessons we have made a range of different snacks and drinks. We have really enjoyed making our own pizzas where we requested what toppings we wanted and learnt new skills such as spreading and chopping. In Cooking we also learnt how to safely make a cup of coffee and tea. We also learnt valuable life skills during these lessons such as how to wash up, use hot equipment safely, hygiene when cooking (washing hands) and how to use knives safely.

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

We have also completed lessons on personal care. The children all explored healthy night time routines, how to clean our teeth, getting dressed and how to clean up different types of mess.



4W Class

4W have had a great start to Year 10 this term. The young people have had to adapt quite quickly to the demands of GCSE and Entry level qualifications, but they have managed brilliantly. They have worked on generating ideas for creative writing pieces and attempted exam-style questions in English Language. In Maths they have worked on their times tables, learned about shape and calculated ratios. In Science, they have travelled deep within the human body to learn about disease, cells, organs, and systems.

Whilst this work is very important, what is also relevant to 4W is the chance to experience a broad curriculum, and opportunities to develop their life skills and communicative abilities. These include regular cooking in food lessons, drama with our link to Birmingham Hippodrome, the chance to partake in African drumming, and lots of practical learning. In Art, they have started mark-making, and in ICT they young people have looked at a variety of tasks which help general ICT skills. The class have also thrown themselves into every PE lesson, showing a healthy dose of competitiveness and demonstrating how to be a good sport.

I am really proud of all that they have achieved so far, and know that it is just the start for them.



4R

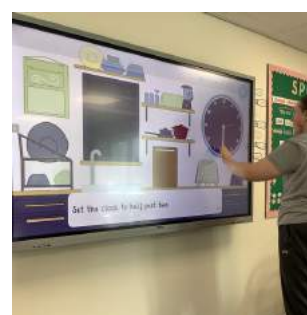
Class



This term 4R have continued to make good progress towards their Entry Levels during year 11. Within our English lessons, we have looked at a range of non-fiction texts including information booklets and letters. 4R read 'Kays Anatomy' together as a class, learning all about our skin. We created our own information booklets – sharing our knowledge with others. We even put our amazing writing skills to the test by writing letters to Mr Adam Kay discussing our views on his book. We also looked at 'The Girl and the Bicycle' – a story with NO text, but surprisingly shares a strong moral. We each wrote our own stories, sharing our own morals with the rest of the class.

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

4R are making some good progress within their food technology lessons, where they continue to develop their cooking skills. The class enjoy cooking (and eating) a variety of delicious food – both savory and sweet. Unfortunately, there is never any spare to send home, although we are lucky enough to see ALL of their delicious recipes on Class Dojo! They have demonstrated a very strong understanding of the importance of staying safe when cooking. We have also been looking at food miles and how we can help reduce the Earth’s pollution by growing our own food or buying locally. During this term, we have had a few visitors. We have very busy participating with Hippodrome activities with Charlotte. Over the Autumn term, we have been working together to re-create our own version of Aladdin. We have worked on our acting skills by stepping into the different shoes of beloved characters such as the loveable Genie, determined Aladdin and the evil Jafar! It was very hard to take photos as they were so busy working hard, but we are looking forward to seeing the final edit! For Black History Month, we were visited by Nick Ledbury who led an African Drumming workshop for us. It was such fun! We even enjoyed our ‘No Pens Day’ where we all brought in mementos which held precious memories. It was lovely to see a variety of different items. They have had a great first term and we cannot wait to see what the future has in store for us. Fantastic work 4R!



4B Class

It’s been another busy term for 4B! We have all been working really hard preparing for our GCSEs and Entry Levels and have recently been reading A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. We have all had support from Hashim who is our Maths tutor and Mrs Thompson who is tutoring us for our Art GCSE. Although we have been working really hard we have also had the chance to enjoy ourselves too. Every Monday, we have a great P.E session with Mr C and have taken part in a lot of games and activities, we have even represented The Pines at a local cricket competition. At least once a

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

fortnight, we cook and we are all able to work completely independently. The hard work will continue after Christmas but only after a well-deserved rest!



Attendance

Up to Friday 15th December, 38 of our pupils have achieved 100% attendance – Amazing!
We have made our procedure easier for parents/carers to inform us of their child's absence:

- Answering machine between 5pm and 7.30am on weekdays and all weekend
- Direct messages to class staff via Dojo
- Email j.mccarthy@pines.bham.sch.uk
- Calling the school office before 9.15am

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Where no contact has been made by parents/carers, by 9.15am on the first day of absence, we will call you. If your child has been absent for 3 days with no contact from parents/carers, we will conduct a Home WellBeing check as part of our safeguarding procedures.

When attendance falls below 90% we will monitor and put support in place where required.

If you are struggling to get your child into school, you may find this link useful:

<https://bwc.nhs.uk/youve-been-missed>

If your child has a medical appointment, please send in a copy of the letter either with your child or via email: j.mccarthy@pines.bham.sch.uk

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Thank you for your continued support in raising attendance.

Mental Health

Action for children

Advice and activities to support children and parents with their mental health and emotional wellbeing. <https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

The Waiting Room

Health and Wellbeing services at your fingertips – Birmingham & Solihull TWR provides an alternative approach to taking control of our own health and well-being. It is a virtual bridge across “The Information Chasm” that connects support services to the recipient almost in-the-waitingroom.org <https://the-waitingroom.org/>

Route 2 Wellbeing Birmingham

Welcome to route2wellbeing Birmingham – the definitive guide to local voluntary and community health and care services in Birmingham. Route2wellbeing makes it easy to find local services and activities that promote good health and wellbeing. <https://r2wbirmingham.info/home>

Kooth

Access support from other young people and professionals, all at your own pace. <https://www.kooth.com/>

Occupational Therapy (OT)

This term has been a busy term, getting to know all the new pupils and reviewing the existing students’ sensory needs. We really enjoyed welcoming many parents to the sensory processing workshop and sharing some of the equipment that we use in school to support sensory regulation.

Next term we will be hosting our picky eater and fussy feeders’ workshop so look out for the DOJO posts and letter if you are interested in the topic. In school we continue to support pupils with sensory



THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

based food activities, exposing children to food items through play based sensory experiences. Some activities that you can do at home to support sensory food play are:

- Making a large bowl of Jelly and placing some small plastic toys cars, or numbers inside and then getting your child to dig through the jelly to find them.
- Using squirty cream to draw pictures or to do splats with.
- Cooked spaghetti and threading dry penne pasta is another lovely activity and promotes fine motor skills too.
- Painting with table sauces, ketchup, honey, mustard etc. · The fabulous Ella's kitchen also has some lovely resources on their website such as the Carrot that could which gives lovely ideas for sensory food play using vegetables. <https://www.ellaskitchen.co.uk/helpful-stuff/the-carrot-that-could>

If you are concerned about your child's food intake please discuss with your GP or contact the NHS Occupational Therapy Helpline on 0121 6832325 they can give advice and signpost to the most appropriate service.

Chair of Governors, Wendy 

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well what a wonderful year 2023 has been here at The Pines School.

It has been a fabulous Autumn Term at The Pines. As governors we have had the privilege to not only hear about the amazing work your children have completed, but to at times, be present in school to see the achievements with our own eyes.

From attending the Halloween disco to being invited to view an art project that some of your children took part in.

As your Governing Board, we are working hard to support Ms Pearce, her senior management team and all of the staff, to keep our vision to Protect, Inspire, Nurture, Embrace and Succeed alive, to enable all of our children to receive the best experience they can.

Can I take this opportunity to congratulate all of last year's Year 11's on their brilliant achievements with their exams? They came along last week to collect their certificates at an awards ceremony. Everyone was so proud. Finally, on behalf of the Governing Board, I would like to wish you a merry and relaxed winter break and a Happy New Year.



Whole School Events

Pines Parliament





WE WANT YOU

The Pines Parliament elections are approaching.
If your child wants to become an MP,
all they need to do is create an A4 campaign poster and bring it in to school
before 3pm on Monday 8th January.
Elections will be taking place on Friday 19th January.

i Other News

Anti-Bullying and Monster Ball 2023 



This half-term we took part in Anti-Bullying Week. We started off the week with Odd Sock Day to represent we are all different. It was so lovely to see so many children taking part. Some of our classes took a closer look at bullying, while other classes thought about kindness and being a good friend. Every class designed their own person to put on our display to represent us standing together against bullying. We rounded off the week by sharing an activity with another class.



Last half term we hosted a Monster Ball for the first time in a few years and my goodness was it a night to remember. We had a disco complete with DJ and lights in the school hall, a spooky sensory experience in the performance and lots of fun stalls in the dining room such as lucky dip, decorating biscuits, tombola, mehndi, face painting and raffles. We raised a whopping £1505 which we are going to use to purchase a PA system. Thank you so much to all who contributed to such an amazing night. The children loved it and we can't wait to do it all again next year.



African Drumming Workshops 2023



To mark 'Black History Month' we had African drumming workshops for all the classes in school. Pupils had an opportunity to explore the drums and different African instruments. The workshops were really good fun and pupils were taught to follow a drumming beat and repeat it back using a call and

response technique. The pupils learnt a short sequence of different rhythm patterns and were able to put them together for a finished piece. All pupils had a valuable and differing experience using their senses.



B.O.S.S Meeting 2023



Great to see our parents and other carers at the BOSS meeting. We started off by having a look at part of some work by Pooky Knightsmith, an adult with ASC on the words we use. We then went on to discuss some of the difficulties that parents were having and tried to look for some solutions. Main theme this time seemed to be based around showering and keeping clean. Ideas ranged from having a Social Story and using symbols inside the shower (and maybe one outside to remind to wrap up in a towel when walking to the bedroom), to trying out different ways of drying. Using a timer or a motivator rated highly as did making sure that the steps involved weren't too big. This then morphed into a discussion about getting hair cut and some ideas on that too, ranging from showing clippers turned off and getting used to them and then slowly introducing them, via having a hairdresser come to the house, through to certain barbers / hairdressers who have more child friendly shops (although these may be too childlike for some of our older pupils).

We finished off with a reminder to everyone to look after themselves.
Hope to see you at the next meeting

Pam and Louise

Duke Of Edinburgh Bronze Award 2023



Pupils in Year 9 have been undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award this academic year. Adapted to meet their needs and recognise achievements and personal development,

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

the introduction of the award at The Pines has been designed to celebrate achievement and build resilience, perseverance and a growth mindset.

In January 2023 we enrolled 20 pupils in Year 9 onto the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. We have now successfully enrolled 25 year 9 pupils onto the Bronze Award with their programme well underway.

Pupils have chosen an activity for each of their sections and throughout the year, pupils will complete the three core elements, Physical (e.g. PE, OT sessions, Fine and Gross Motor Skills), Skills (e.g. Art, DT, Music, ICT, Open Theatre) and Volunteering (e.g. Recycling, School Jobs, iPads), for 3 months, whilst continuing one of the areas for 6 months.

Pupils will be finishing their Duke of Edinburgh Award by Summer 2024 completing a 2-day outdoor expedition and activities in the local community. Many of our pupils have already successfully completed nearly half of their DofE bronze award this term alone, we cannot wait to share their work with you all!



School Games 2023

This term, The Pines have been recognising pupils across the school for their efforts in PE lessons, for their work. This has been recognised against one of the six school games values:

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Determination, Teamwork, Respect, Passion, Honesty and Self-Belief. Congratulations to all our winners!

Within the curriculum, classes have explored topics: Gymnastics, Dance and Movement patterns and games with classes making links to sports stars such as: Amy Tinkler (Artistic Gymnast), Jordan Thomas (Karate), Kayleigh Haggio (Boccia), Ben Lane (Badminton), Eve Muirhead (Curling), Adrian Waller (Squash).

As well as this, classes have been involved in various competitions such as the Warwickshire Indoor Disability Cricket Competition at Edgbaston Cricket Ground, the Y6 Panathalon Challenge at University of Birmingham and working towards swimming water safety skills through swimming lessons at Kingstanding Swimming Baths.



Through pupil voice we have asked pupils to also conduct their own research into a variety of different sports stars across a range of sports and activities that they see as role models. This pupil voice will feed into our curriculum and link to the different elements we deliver so pupils have a recognisable athlete from the local and global stage to look up to and aspire to be like.

Home School

Home School have had a couple of 'chit chat' parent groups this term.

It was lovely to meet so many new parents at our Welcome Parent Group back in October.

The Sensory Workshop with Laura our OT was very well attended and parents found it really useful.

Home School have more workshops planned for next term, plus our monthly groups to get together and chat to each other.

Parent group opportunities from January 2024:



Wednesday 17 th January 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Toileting workshop- how to start and sustain a toilet training program for pupils with ASC.
Wednesday 24 th January 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Fussy Feeders- by Laura Graham, Occupational Therapist.
Monday 29 th January 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning & Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Early reading skills workshop by Shelly Rudd, English Lead.
*Monday 29 th January 2024	Evening Parent Workshop 5-6pm	Early reading skills workshop by Shelly Rudd, English Lead.
Wednesday 7 th February 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Kooth Mental Health- outside speakers sharing support about teenagers mental health issues.
Wednesday 21 st February 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Inappropriate Touch by Dr. Prithvi, lecturer of Autism studies at Birmingham University.
Monday 26 th February 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Coffee and cake.
Wednesday 6 th March 2024	Parents Evening	Come and meet your child's teacher and discuss their progress.
Wednesday 13 th March 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Come and enjoy some hot cross buns to celebrate Easter.
Wednesday 10 th April 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Chat with us and celebrate Eid.
Monday 15 th April 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	DWP Finance talk by Abdul from DWP- what are you entitled to?
Wednesday 8 th May 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Coffee and cake.
Wednesday 15 th May 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Mental Health Week
Wednesday 22 nd May 2024	Parent Workshop 10am – 11.45am	Sensory Life Skills by Laura Graham, Occupational Therapist
Wednesday 5 th June 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Coffee and cake.
*Thursday 13 th June 2024	Evening Parent Workshop via ZOOM	Sensory overview (of all sensory workshops this year), by Laura Graham, Occupational Therapist.
Monday 17 th June 2024	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Coffee and cake.
Wednesday 3 rd July 2024	Parents Evening	Come and meet your child's teacher and discuss their progress.
Wednesday 10 th July	Parent Group Chit Chat Coffee Morning 10am – 11.45am	Celebrate the end of the school year with cream tea and scones.

THE PINES SCHOOL **NEWSLETTER**

New School Lunch Menu January 2024

THE PINES SCHOOL LUNCH MENU (JANUARY 2024) Please note, this is the proposed menu, some items may be subject to change.

WEEK ONE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Chicken Goujons	Fish Fingers	Roast Turkey Halal Chicken	Fish Fingers	Freshly made Margherita Pizza
Quorn Goujons	Macaroni Cheese	Roast Quorn Stuffing and Gravy	Winter Vegetable bake Cheese and onion pasty	Fish of the day
Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes
Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/ Baguettes
Peas Seasoned Wedges	Mixed Vegetables Spaghetti	Fresh carrots Green beans Roast Potatoes	Sweetcorn Garlic bread or rice	Chunky chips, peas or baked beans
Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts
Lemon Iced Sponge and custard	Vanilla shortbread and Milk	Cheesecake	Chocolate Cracknell and custard	Flavoured Ice Cream Fruit Jelly

WEEK TWO



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lamb burger with ketchup	Pork sausages	Roast Chicken Halal Chicken	Chicken curry	Freshly made Margherita Pizza
Quorn burger with ketchup	Quorn sausages with gravy	Quorn roast Stuffing and gravy	Vegetable curry	Fish Goujons
Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes	Jacket Potatoes fish fingers	Jacket Potatoes
Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes	Sandwiches/Baguettes
Sweetcorn Potato wedges	Mixed vegetables Creamed potato	Fresh carrots Green beans Roast Potatoes	Mixed vegetables Rice and Naan	Peas Baked beans Chunky chips
Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts	Salad Home Made Bread Fresh fruit Fruit yoghurts
Flapjack and custard	Chocolate Mousse	Cookies and milk	Chocolate crunch and custard	Flavoured ice cream and fruit jelly

Secondary pupils school dinner cost £2.55

Primary & Nursery pupils school dinner cost £2.40

THE PINES SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

School Website and Social Media



School Website



We have a new and improved school website. If you have a moment we would love you to check it out and provide us with some feedback.

Our school website is: www.thepinesspecialschool.com



School Twitter



Our school has a Twitter account which is @ThePinesSpecial. We are starting to use this social media platform more frequently now to keep you informed of our school news and events. Please follow us to stay updated.



Term Dates 2023 - 2024



Autumn Term 2023

Term Starts: Monday 4th September 2023

Half-Term: Monday 30th October 2023 **to** Friday 3rd November 2023

Term-Ends: Friday 22nd December 2023

Spring Term 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8th January 2024

Half-Term: Monday 12th February 2024 **to** Friday 16th February 2024

Term-Ends: Friday 22nd March 2024

Summer Term 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8th April 2024

Half-Term: Monday 27th May 2024 **to** Friday 31st May 2024

Term-Ends: Friday 19th July 2024

Teacher Training Days (school closed to pupils)

Monday 4th September 2023

Wednesday 31st January 2024

Wednesday 15th May 2024

Monday 22nd July 2024

