



Dear parents carers and families

In this newsletter the focus is on the professional training all staff at school completed on January 4th 2024. Therapists, vocational coaches, learning support assistants, teachers and senior leaders spent the day together to consider ways reading is for all at our amazing school.

Dr Sarah Moseley led the training and as a former Headteacher of a special school it was relevant for each and every learner.

The title of the course, Reading for All resonated with all staff.

How do we enthuse all learners with a love of stories and books?

We began by discussing our own favourite books and why they remain so special. Discussions in groups followed of when we read, for how long and where. I can tell you we had laughs about the where we read and for how long!

Dr Sarah then discussed the foundation skills for reading- communication, attention, language comprehension auditory and visual processing skills. Staff were asked to consider baseline for learners.

At the end of the day all staff groups created action plans so that the key focus of the day Reading for All remains active in school

I hope you enjoy reading this month's newsletter. Each class or provision explains how they have integrated aspects of the training into classroom practice as part of their action plans.

In other news Dr Emily Rubin will be in the UK in June. Emily is one of the founders of SCERTS. All staff are trained in using SCERTS and values her training in October 2023.





At the start of the Spring Term, we have used interactive stories to further engage learners in the exciting world of stories. Story boxes have been created, linked to the terms topic traditional tales. The class team have created a variety of props which learners use whilst listening to the stories.

Creating interactive stories in this way has had a really positive effect, bringing the text alive. Learners playing with characters as the text unfolds and creates an immersive environment.

Learners explore different aspects of the story such as stirring the bears porridge in The Three Bears. Being together and sharing text whilst being active has been of great benefit to the learners and we are eagerly creating more prop ideas for future texts.

Ella, Claire & the team



Bumblebee class have focused on extending their provision for language learning opportunities and reading this term through increased opportunities to engage in songs. Songs are used throughout the daily timetable and in focussed sessions. Learners attend to visual supports linked to songs, promoting early reading skills. They explore the props from number songs and join in to remove or add props during the counting within these songs.

Learners are taking turns to make requests and choices at song time and to fill in gaps with words, symbols or actions. This is supporting their communication development and language comprehension. Learners are developing their auditory skills through identifying animal sounds in songs such as Old Mac Donald (a particular favourite in Bumblebee!) Learners are demonstrating anticipation of upcoming sounds and some are beginning to copy animal sounds, labelling the animals and using Makaton signs.

Aside from developing speech; repetitive chanting, reading, writing or hearing of rhymes promotes good listening skills and memory retention.

Deirdre, Claire & the team

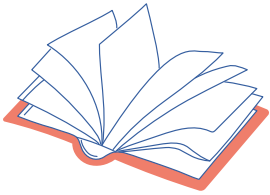




Butterfly

Butterfly class have been exploring the sounds and syllables within words to increase our phonological awareness. We are learning to clap the syllables within our names as well as short rhyming tongue twisters which are lots of fun! Learning rhymes, action poems and songs also builds our vocabulary and experience with rhyme and segmenting words.

Words are everywhere so as well as learning in circle time we also play with words throughout the day and around the school environment, even in the pool, slapping the syllables out on top of the water!



Understanding and recognizing the syllables and clapping out the parts of a word helps us to build our vocabulary and sets us on the path to learning sounds to develop our phonics and reading skills. Perhaps you could also try this at home!

Lisa & the team



Dragonfly

This term we have introduced immersive environments to further engage learners in stories. Creating immersive environments has allowed for learners to explore aspects of the story and feel as though they are characters within the story. Furthermore, it has enabled learners to develop their skills and knowledge through applying aspects from their story to real life scenarios. We have been looking at Goldilocks and the Three Bears and learners have thoroughly enjoyed exploring aspects of the story, in particular the sensory exploration of both dry and wet porridge and roleplaying different characters within the story.

Amela & the team





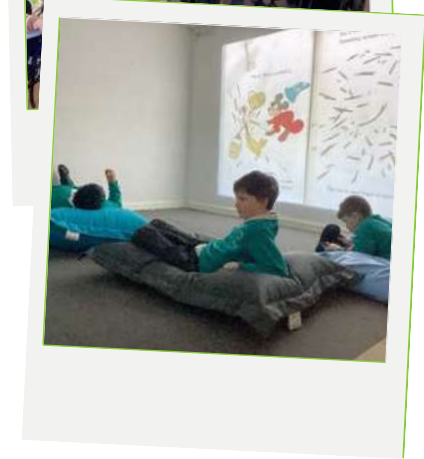
In Buttercup class we have introduced audio books to the learners. We have been doing this in different ways, for example in the sensory room, in class as a small group and listening to stories in the background as we work and play.

Listening to audio stories and books has had a positive impact on class. They have supported the learners to relax and to use their imagination while listening. Playing the stories in the background has also helped the learners to focus and concentrate on their work and has increased their listening skills.

We have also been practicing our reading by sharing stories with our friends in other classes and to the residents on our weekly visits to the care home. This has been a lovely, positive experience and has supported the learners with developing their confidence in reading.

We are looking forward to exploring more stories!

Karen & the team



We have further developed our class Communication Display Board. The board has a variety of methods of communication that the learners are able to use to communicate requests or comments and as a visual support for turn taking. The board has a sentence strip, which states "I need ...". The learners are able to select from the symbols below and place the symbol on the substance strip, to complete the sentence / request. Additionally, the board has (VOCA) buttons that speak the words of "More", "Finished", Toilet", and "Help", that the learners can press to make these requests. Also, the board has turn taking wheels, that the learners use to communicate turn taking and 'who is next'. Finally, the board has a Core Boards and symbol boards that learners can comment and initiate requests. This Communication Display Board has increased our learners' independence and their voice.



Sky & the team



Introducing print into our daily routine has been fab. The aim of this, is for the learners to gain experience of looking at their names. Our long-term aim is they might learn to recognise their own name. As learners arrive, their belongings are placed on a named 'peg' each learner is taken to their 'peg' so they can see their names and where their bags and coats are kept. During our daily 'hello' session, each learner is shown a card with their name, which we either sound out the syllables or the letters. Some learners look very intently at their cards, while others listen to syllables as we say them. The learners continue to be immersed in a language rich environment, with the use of a resonance board, sensory stories, story massage and musical maths.



Carolyn & the team



In Chestnut class we have focused on investigating the interests of all our learners and to source appropriate books. We have set time aside each day for each learner to select a book that interests them and to spend time with an adult exploring the book. Some will be reading to the adult while others demonstrate their understanding by responding to questions.

We have explored reading in different areas across the school as well as in class. Apparently, 'it's very exciting to put your coat on to read,' one learner expressed.

Our theme this term is Mythical Creatures and our class books have contained lots of dragons as characters. One learner commented that they would like to have a dragon, so we made one big one and lots of little ones out of junk.

Alistair & the team



We have been developing an awareness of the learner's interests and introduced activities around this. Homework has informed us of likes such as favourite cartoons, hobbies, food. It is apparent some learners like Julia Donaldson stories and watch "Fireman Sam". We have tried on different hats such as a fire fighter and pilot. It has led to some great identification of emotions as learners loved looking at themselves in mirrors as firemen and pilots.

Encouraging reading for all for Maple learners has been a focus as part of a small group and one to one with staff. We endeavour to use more books related to learner's interests so please continue to let us know their current interests and hobbies so we can continue to inspire and motivate learning. What an exciting Spring term ahead!



Lindsey, Amelia & the team



We have been looking at using a wide range of texts from different sources.

We are investigating the location of a variety of online resources to vary our reading materials.

Learners have enjoyed exploring e-books from websites including Internet Archive, Twinkl Originals and Amazon. Next we will be researching how to use our library books to access the online library catalogues.

We have been guided by learner foci, interests and hobbies including looking at physical and online sources of maps including satellite mapping such as Google Earth, Google Maps and Ordnance Survey.

Rachel & the team





Meet the Head Teacher (Jacqueline) & EHCco (Natasha) Fridays in March 2024!

Natasha Ashworth -Shergill is the schools Education & Health Care coordinator. I meet Natasha weekly to share information regarding learner progress. This could be a change of circumstances which the Local authority may support. We also discuss how the school is operating and any challenges we may be dealing with. Natasha can support the school by co coordinating responses from professionals in Buckinghamshire.

So please do come along and meet both Natasha and myself you never know what you may find out.....and the coffee is good....

We will be in the café from 9am until 11am on the following dates 8th 15th & 22nd March 2024

Website

Hurrah ! We are launching a renewed website which better reflects the school currently. Please do look at the website – I hope you find the information useful. We have a parents section with information about each phase of the school in the form of a school prospectus. You will see the range of provision available in each phase. This will be update yearly to reflect current curriculum opportunities and provision.

The website aims to inform about aspects of the school from therapy, teaching and learning, support for families and statutory information all school are required to have on their websites.

We will also use our new website to keep you informed of events, newsletters, new initiatives and all our social media platforms.

Deep Dive

On Wednesday 21st February teachers and therapists met during the school day to discuss individual learners progress and provision. Deep Dives take place each term and are an opportunity for professionals to reflect on strategies which individual learners may require to further increase their participation in learning. In the next meeting parents/carers will be invited to attend to further develop strategies.

School uniform.

Thank you for your response to learners wearing school uniform – the drive for all learners to wear a school top (either cardigan or sweater) has been so successful. It is great to see learners in the school uniform and how proud they are.

I have contacted the uniform providers to consider minor adjustments to the tops for learners who experience challenge with the current design.



School lunch.

A school lunch is available for all learners each day. Many of the learners enjoy the hot meal provided and develop life skills when choosing food and communicating their choices. If you would like your child to have a school lunch please do contact Charlotte in the admin office.

Snack time

We will continue to purchase dry snacks and fresh fruit weekly to support learners to develop healthy lifestyle choices. The resources purchased in the autumn term, such as fruit cutters, small plates and cutlery are used daily in class to support learners self-help skills. Learners are encouraged during this time to use their communication skills to request specific items such as fruit, bread sticks or a drink.

Transport

If you collect your child from school you will have noticed an increase in traffic both AM and PM. This is due to increased numbers of learners from September 2023. Whilst we manage the transport- all learners are in their class by 9am and have all left school by 3.30pm, we are mindful and will continually assess the situation. Both Mark and Graham (in hi vis jackets) are in both car parks from 8.50am/ 3.10pm to guide all transport safely to destinations. Staff greet learners at all entrances and support them to their classrooms.

However recently we have observed cars at the site from before 8.00am and as early as 1pm to drop off and collect learners at the end of the school day. This can create additional vehicles on the site and we are mindful to support both The Leys and Aspire with managing their transport.

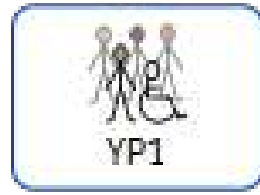
Please be mindful about parking on the site during school days.

HAF Programme

The HAF programme (www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/haf) provides holiday activities and hot meals to children and young people in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals over the Christmas, Easter and Summer Holidays. Giving children and young people opportunities to socialise, experience new things and develop new friendships. The DfE have allowed authorities the flexibility to allow up to 15% of HAF programme places to be accessed by some groups of children who don't receive benefits-related free school meals but who the authority believes can benefit from HAF provision. For Buckinghamshire, these groups are:

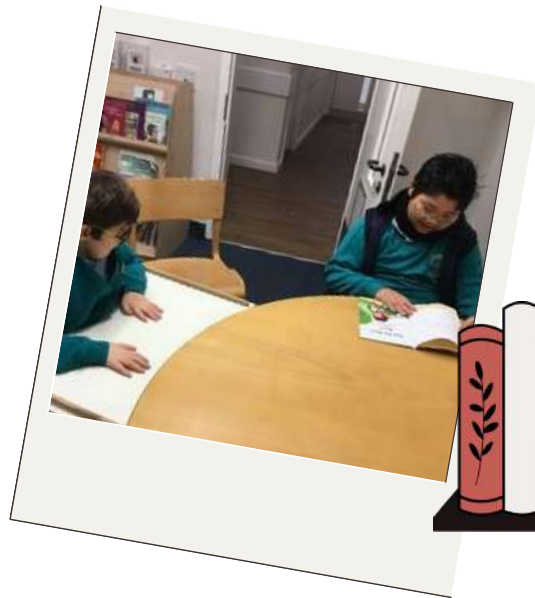
- Children considered in need, at risk or vulnerable.
- Young carers.
- Looked-after children or previously looked after children.
- Children with an EHCP.
- Children who have low attendance rates at school or who are at risk of exclusion.
- Children living in areas of high deprivation or from low-income households who are not in receipt of free school meals.
- Ukrainian families not currently accessing Free School Meals.

Developing our shared love of reading is proving to be a top activity in YP1. Both learners and staff are relishing in the opportunity to use our new library area.



Learners from Maple class are great readers and sharing books together has been one of the highlights of our week. A big shout to Aman in Maple - you can read our favourite books to us anytime!

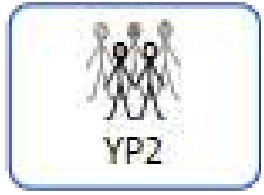
Katherine & the team



Oak class have been focusing on sensory stories which help our learners' with their sensory processing. We have been reading stories that help the learners to identify animal sounds by making different animal sounds and copying different movements such as 'waddle like a penguin or hissss like a snake'. In one of our sensory story sessions we explored different textures including dry sand, mixing water and sand, leaves and bubble wrap. We have also been learning some magic words like 'abracadabra' and waving our magic wands for stories like 'Winnie and Wilbur'.

Anj & the team





As part of Reading For All YP2 class have focused on reading whilst out in the local community. From spotting familiar words whilst Travel Training to visiting Chesham Library as well as various bookshops. We have brought this learning back into the classroom where we created our own books for our My Community and Me project. The learners have been interacting with one another and sharing photos from home which they have then used to create their 'All About Me' books which have been proudly displayed in the classroom.



Catherine & the team



We took part in an Orienteering Festival in January at Alfriston School, Beaconsfield. We read a map to find clues, some learners did this almost independently, others with varied support. Decoding the station cards and writing all the correct details down on our team sheets was another task to master. While having fun at Panathlon Ten Pin Bowling in January at Rogue Bowling in Aylesbury, we responded to initial sounds and letters of our first names to take turns and have fun. It was a popular activity and great to see new skills being learnt on the spot. While attending a dance event in February at Alfriston School in Beaconsfield, we followed visual 2D and 3D images to learn little dance routines. Students from Alfriston School were our coaches and our HHS super team followed their guidance with enthusiasm. We also made lots of choices and comments in our PE sessions while playing games.



Sarka





I endeavour to make reading an integral part of Horticulture sessions as it is a brilliant way to open up the garden to a world of imagination and endless creative possibilities. The seasons lend themselves so beautifully to story telling and of course nature can illustrate a thousand words. I often choose a story to read and then plan a session around the story. This week we are looking at Daffodils and we have been reading the story "That's not a Daffodil" by Elizabeth Honey. It is about a child who is given a bulb and watches it grow over time. He uses his imagination to describe what the bulb looks like at each stage of its development as he doesn't think it will be a daffodil. His friend the gardener helps him to care for the bulb until the fantastic day arrives when it blooms and the child is happy to have achieved success in growing the flower.



The book allows opportunity for many discussion points and so far the learners have engaged very well and enjoyed reading the book out loud to their peers.

Reading in the garden environment is a really lovely, calming activity and has many positive benefits on mental health. The squirrels enjoy a story or two as well!!



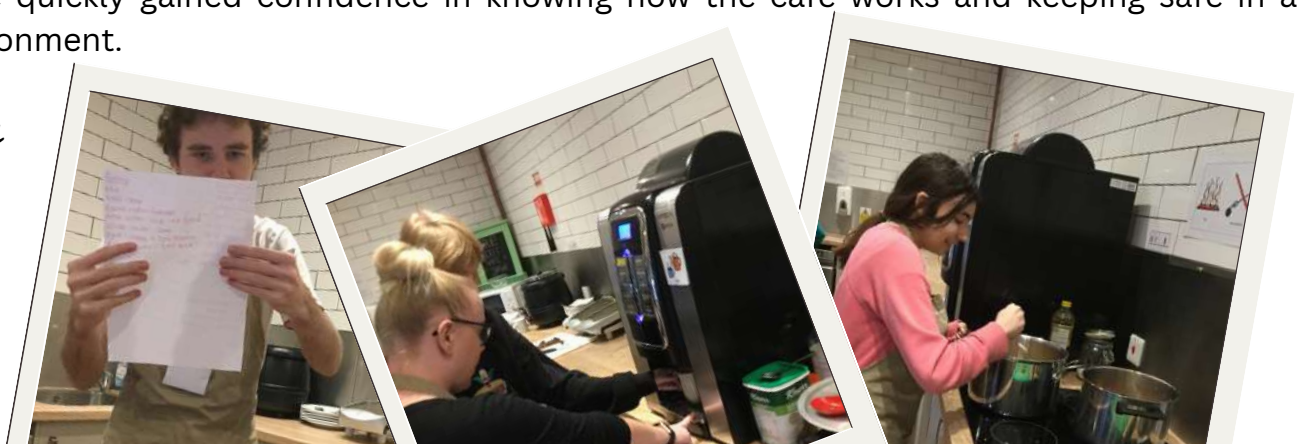
Nicky

Learners on work experience in The Potting Shed café have benefited from the recent training on reading for all. In the café the range of symbol support to locate items has increased.

When visiting the café you will see symbols on cupboard doors, for example, indicating where the plates are stored or cutlery kept. This supports the further development of autonomy skills as learners are able to locate and put away items independently. We will be focusing on expanding this to our online till and card machine to further support our learners in their work placement, and provide learners with more independence when serving customers and helping them build a new skillset.

Learners can support customers by responding to their needs efficiently and locating the item requested. Bigger items such as the dishwasher and the coffee machine have symbol support and learners have quickly gained confidence in knowing how the café works and keeping safe in a working environment.

Dani & Amy



Learners as customers with The Potting Shed

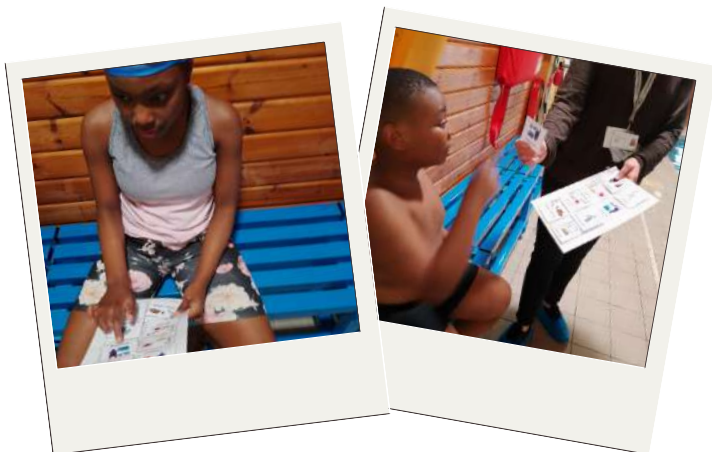
Each Wednesday learners in LEAF visit the café to purchase a snack deal (drink and hummus and veggie sticks). The learners value the time in the café during the morning developing skills such as ordering, paying for their purchases and spending quality time with friends outside of the classroom.

Three learners in Willow asked if they could have a lunch together in the café over lunch time. Dani and Amy in the café were delighted to make this happen and the photographs indicate a fab lunch was had by the three girls.



If you wish to plan for learners to have a lunch as a special treat, do contact the café team to organise this.

If you as parents or other family members would like to plan a lunch with a learner again we are more than happy to support this. Reminder the café is open to the public on Thursday & Fridays 9am – 2pm.



FRIENDS OF HERITAGE HOUSE SCHOOL – EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA (!) FUNDRAISING EVENTS



The Friends of Heritage House School will be holding an Easter Raffle which will be drawn in The Potting Shed Café at Heritage House School on Friday March 22nd. We have some fabulous chocolate (and non-chocolate!) related prizes including a Hotel du Chocolat Velvetiser and an Easter hamper worth in excess of £100. We will also be running competitions to guess the name of our fluffy Easter lamb and to guess the number of chocolate eggs in the jar (clue: there are lots, it's a big jar!!).

Raffle tickets and details of how to take part in the competitions will be sent to you shortly. Please do support us if you can,

Carole, Emily, Patsy & Sarah

In hydro therapy for our learners we use waterproof books and visual aids, such as picture cards or laminated images. These tools not only facilitate literacy skills but also aid in communication, sensory integration, and development. By incorporating reading and visuals into pool sessions we create a supportive environment , confidence, independence and enjoyment for learners.

Anna

Book Week 2024 4th - 8th March



The timely arrival of Book Week 2024 will further develop our school's love of reading and we have many events planned to celebrate books and reading.

Reading for pleasure has many benefits including it being a shared experience and a way of engaging with learners in a fun and exciting way. It develops communication, understanding, page turning builds fine motor skills, develops co-ordination and engaging stories can lead to games of role play, art projects and so much more.

Did you know?

Reading for pleasure has social benefits as well educational and can make people feel more connected to the wider community. Reading increases a person's understanding of their own identity, improves empathy and gives them an insight into the world view of others (The Reading Agency 2015).

The events for book week are:

- Monday, March 4th: Launch of "Where Were You Caught Reading?" Competition
Start snapping and submitting those photos! Send in your entry to: office@heritagehouse.bucks.sch.uk

Please include in the email: the learners name/class/permission given to share image on social media. Winners will be selected based on creativity, originality, and how they've captured the essence of enjoying a good book. Prizes will be book vouchers, ensuring that your next reading adventure is as exciting as the last. Entries close 8th March 2pm. Winners announced at 3pm the same day!

- Tuesday, March 5th: In House Book Shop

Heritage House will be opening, for one day our own in house book shop so that you can use your book token to buy a book from the World Book Day Collection (no money needed)

- Wednesday, March 6th: School Closed - INSET Day
- Thursday, March 7th: Dress up as Your Favourite Book Character
Come to school dressed as your favourite character. Show off your costume and parade through school! What will your teachers dress up in this year?
- Friday, March 8th: The Big Read & Book Exchange and Competition Winners Revealed!
Every learner to bring a book to school to swap for another

A fun day of story sharing in class and the opportunity to join in with other classes
Winners of the 'Where Were You Caught Reading?' Competition announced