



High Ash CE School  
Weekly Newsletter  
Friday 9th January 2026



*'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16*

## Grow Together Shine Forever

To all our families,

Happy New Year! Welcome back to school. It has been a great week, seeing the children enjoying their learning and working hard together.

On Monday the teachers undertook training on Oracy. Oracy is the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language. We are very committed to developing our children's oracy skills.  
**Why does Oracy Matter?**

- **Academic Impact:** The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) notes that oral language interventions can provide pupils with an average of **six months' additional progress** in a single year.
- **Employability:** Communication is consistently rated by UK employers as the top transferable skill, essential for a digital economy where "human" skills like empathy and persuasion cannot be automated.
- **Mental Health:** Developing a robust emotional vocabulary allows children to better articulate their feelings, leading to improved self-regulation and stronger peer relationships.
- **Social Equity:** Children from lower-income backgrounds are statistically more likely to start school with language delays; prioritising oracy ensures that a child's background does not determine their ability to have their voice heard in adulthood.

The children have talk tactics, where they have sentence stems and know hand signals to be able to join in a discussion. It would be great if you can ask your children about this at home and maybe encourage the children to have a discussion or debate with you at home.

### **Music Concert...**

We will be holding our annual **Music Concert on Thursday 12th February** this year rather than in the summer term. The summer term can be quite hectic so we thought we'd try putting on the concert during the Spring term instead.

We are holding **auditions on Thursday 15th January** for anyone who would like to participate. This is open to all pupils, whether someone sings or plays a musical instrument. We're happy to see auditions from soloists or those performing as a duet or group. We know it can be daunting standing on stage but there is plenty of time to practice and everyone is very supportive, so please encourage your children to take part if they are interested.

If your child would like to audition for the concert, please complete the following form by the end of Tuesday 13th January <https://forms.gle/uLnk6jkQoevzwkg17> (Please complete a separate form for each child who would like to audition).

### ***Please book a school meal on Thursday 15th January...***

All children in Foundation and KS1 are entitled to a free school meal. The school is given a grant by the government to cover the cost, the value of the grant is determined by the number of pupils booking a meal on Census Day. For every child who *does not* book we effectively lose £496.

This term Census Day is on **Thursday 15th January**. The Ash Team always makes sure it is one of the children's favourites.

If your child is Acorns, Apple, Cherry or Chestnut please book a school meal via MCAS for Thursday 15th October. If your child would still prefer a packed lunch from home that's fine, please still book a school meal on MCAS but email the kitchen to let them know you'll be sending your child with a packed lunch (kitchen@highashschool.co.uk).

Thank you for your support—it really does make a difference to our funding.



### ***Learning highlights this week...***

#### **Acorns**

The children came back from Christmas full of excitement and news to tell their friends about all of the fun they had during their break. It was lovely to hear all of the conversations and to see the children so happy to be back together again.

We have been exploring 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' this week in Acorn class. We shared the story and talked about the events that happened. We then had some discussion around Goldilocks and the choices that she made when she went into the bear's house. We talked about what she did, eating the porridge, breaking Baby Bear's chair and sleeping in Baby Bear's bed and how this would have made Baby Bear feel. We had a discussion around whether or not Goldilocks had made good choices and decided that she should have said sorry to Baby Bear for making him feel sad. We then created pictures and wrote about Baby Bear's feelings.

In our outside classroom, we were fascinated by the appearance of ice everywhere! It was in lots of our mud kitchen containers, pots and pans. We were amazed at how thick and hard some of it was and experimented with how we could break it down into smaller pieces. We also had to free some of our toys that had been frozen in the ice. We talked about how the ice had formed and what we noticed about it.

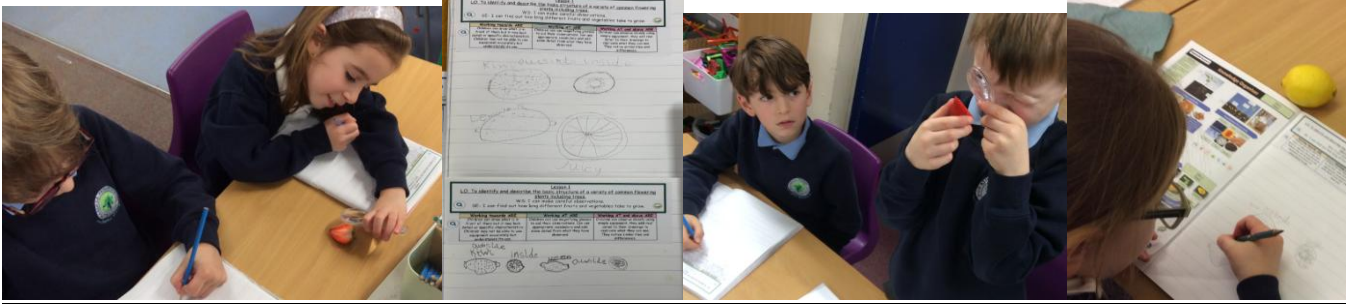


#### **Acorn Reminders**

- Please remember to send in diaries daily.
- We will be starting Forest School sessions up again next Thursday afternoon weather permitting, so please ensure your child has their wellies back in school if you took them home over the holidays and extra layers such as hats and gloves as we will be exploring the Winter weather.
- **Friday 23rd January - See us Shine event for parents at 9.00am. Please click on the link below to confirm your attendance: <https://forms.gle/bwJHBQ7NpECLNyUt8>. This is an opportunity for you to come in to visit our classroom and engage in learning through play with your child. You will be able to explore the indoor and outdoor classroom with your child and see how their confidence has grown since starting in Acorns. The session will finish at 9.30am.**

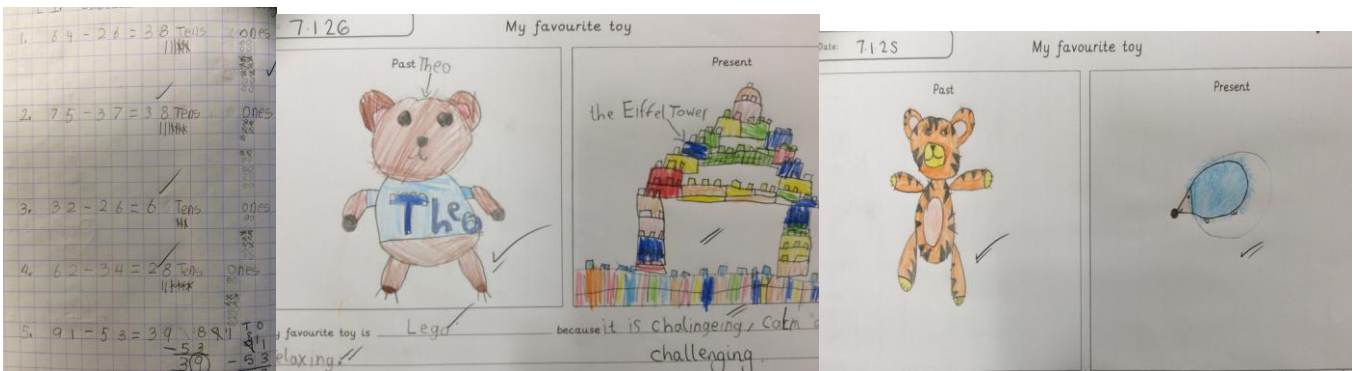
## Year One and Two

We were so happy to see Key Stage One children return to school with enthusiasm and smiles despite the cold weather! We have started the term with our new Science topic - Plants and the children enjoyed a practical lesson developing their scientific observation and detailed drawing skills. We studied a variety of fruit and then cut them open to observe and describe what we could see.



In English, Year 2 have been excited to start joining up their writing in our Handwriting lessons and have been continuing to tackle the tricky skill of exchanging when subtracting two 2 digit numbers. Year 1 have started a new unit and are becoming experts on place Value to 20.

In History our new topic is Toys and our big question is 'How have toys changed?' The first lesson saw the children using their oracy skills to question their friends about their favourite toys. We discussed how the toys we loved when we were very little are often different to our favourite toys today!



Well done for a fabulous start to Spring Term KS1!

## Year 1/2 Reminders

- Diaries and reading books in school every day please.

## Year Three and Four

This week in Science we have started our new topic - Light! In our first lesson we used our Oracy skills to discuss what light is and what dark is. We had some brilliant discussions about dark being the absence of light and needing light to see. To discover more about light we held an investigation, using a shoe box, a pencil and a torch. We first looked into the shoebox using one hole and discussed what we could see. Then, we poked some holes in the shoe box to let light in and discussed what we could see.



Our new RE topic for this half term is learning all about the Sanatana Dharma religion. We started this off by looking at each other, telling our partner what we could see and vice versa. We used mirrors to show what we saw and our partners told us things about ourselves that maybe we couldn't see. By doing this we discovered that we usually judge people by what they look like and what is on the 'outside' and not the 'inside' and changing what you look like on the outside does not mean that you are different on the inside.



On Wednesday, we had our Hook Day! We had Dan in from Portals to the Past to tell us all about the Romans in preparation for our new topic. We started the day looking at time and understanding how long ago the Romans lived moving onto how Rome was built (interestingly, not in a day!). During the afternoon we learnt about medicine, engineering, the military, the end of Roman Britain and even played some Roman board games! It was a jam packed day full of fantastic learning.



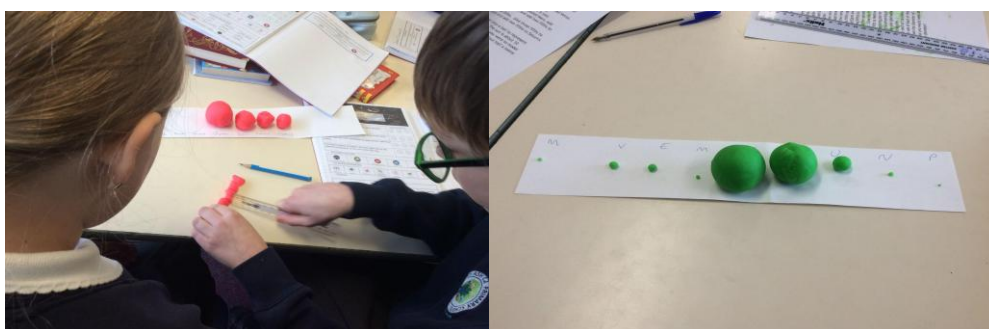


### Year 3/4 Reminders

- Please send in as many rolls (toilet rolls, kitchen rolls, wrapping paper rolls) as you can for our DT!

### Year Five and Six

This week, we have got stuck in with our new units for this half term. Starting with science, we have begun exploring the different planets in our solar system, using play-doh to represent their positions and sizes. The process involved some maths and plenty of patience!



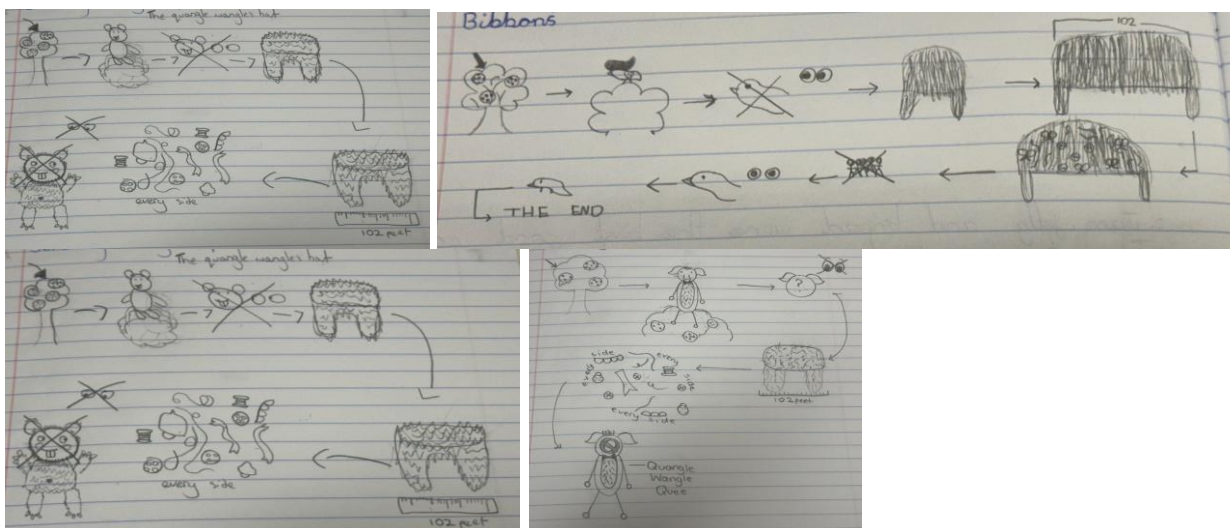
On Friday, we were treated with an amazing hook day. The Wonderdome came into school and immersed us in all things space!



In Art this half term, we are studying architecture and began our unit by studying houses and seeing whether we could remember what our own houses looked like. We sketched these in our books, taking careful consideration of proportion. On Thursday morning, we had Paige Denham into our classes to introduce us to the world of architecture, particularly the architect Zaha Hadid before challenging us with the art form of printing, which we will be using further into this half term.



In Guided Reading, we have been studying nonsense poetry this week, in particular 'The Quangle Wangle's Hat' (1877) by Edward Lear. We have enjoyed reading this poem as it has a wonderful rhythm and considered all of the nonsense words and phrases that appear throughout. On Thursday, we created fantastic story maps, to demonstrate our understanding of what is happening in the poem.



### Year 5/6 Reminders

- Year 5/6 girls football training and Y6 football training will resume next week (w/b 12.1.26)

### Young Voices

On **Monday 12th January**, we will be taking the choir (those who have signed up) to sing at the Young Voices Concert in Birmingham. On the day please ensure:

- The children come into school at the normal time and in their normal school clothes (including a white top/tshirt). Those who have ordered a Young Voices T-shirt will receive them on the day.
- They bring a backpack with both a packed lunch and a packed tea. Children cannot buy food at the venue.
- They have plenty of water
- They bring a coat



The children will travel to and from the venue by coach, parents cannot pick-up their children from the venue after the concert. We hope to arrive back at school around 10.30pm but we will send an ETA as soon as the coach leaves the venue.

Young Voices is a long day, so we do permit the children to arrive at school a little later the following day. **Please make sure they are in school by 10.30am on Tuesday morning.**

### *Peripatetic Violin lessons*

Peripatetic violin lessons with Emily Holland begin next week. These lessons are available for children in Year 2 upwards, and don't worry if you don't have an instrument as Emily can help you arrange the hire of a violin. **Please see the attached letter for information about price and how to book.** If you're interested please contact Emily for more information.



### *Parent Governor Elections*

We will be sending a letter home next week inviting nominations to become a parent governor. Any parent with a child at High Ash is eligible to stand. We have two vacancies at the moment. If more than two parents stand for nomination then there will be an election and all parents are encouraged to cast their vote.



Becoming a parent governor is a great way to support High Ash and ultimately your child's education. It's less about running the school day-to-day and more about acting as a critical friend to the leadership team. It is a great form of professional development if you're looking to add to your CV, and many employers actively encourage employees to take on voluntary roles like this to help support their local community.

If you're interested, look out for the letter next week with details about how to stand for election or email our Chair at [chair@highashschool.co.uk](mailto:chair@highashschool.co.uk) for more information.

### *Identifying Young Carers at School*

We wish to raise awareness about young carers and the important role schools play in supporting them. A young carer is a child or young person who helps care for a family member with a physical or mental illness, disability, or substance misuse. This may involve carrying out practical tasks, providing emotional support or both. Every caring situation can be different.

National research shows that many young carers are not being identified in schools, meaning many children may be caring without access to vital support. By informing the school about your child's caring role, we can ensure they receive the right support which can result in a significant difference to their wellbeing, education and future opportunities.

If you believe your child/children has a caring role at home (even if you are unsure) we encourage you to let us know. You can speak to a member of staff confidentially, and together we can explore what support may be beneficial.

Please remember that identifying your child as a young carer is not about labelling; but about ensuring they are recognised, understood and given the best chance to belong, achieve and thrive at our school.

For external support; we would also recommend registering any carers within your household with Carers Bucks, the local carers support service. Once a young carer is identified, they may benefit from:

- Peer support groups and activities
- Targeted wellbeing interventions
- One-to-one support sessions
- Advice, information and guidance

You can complete a self-referral via their website, <https://carersbucks.org/>, alternatively we understand that this can be daunting and would be happy to do this on your behalf after we have spoken. In order for us to identify any

child carers within our school and be able to offer them support, we ask if you could please click on the link below to complete a short google form at your earliest convenience:

<https://forms.gle/BgnmbdVpn6472Ls16>

Thank you for working with us to support the wellbeing and success of all our pupils.

#### **Reflections this week...**

This week we thought about 2026: Our Year to Shine Together. How we are keen to build a school where everyone belongs and everyone grows. We reminded ourselves of the PROUD principles and how they help us to ensure everyone feels welcome at High Ash. The bible reading we looked at was: 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 *"There should be no division in the body, but its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."*

#### **Attendance...**

This week's attendance is 95.4%. Remember to always email [absence@highashschool.co.uk](mailto:absence@highashschool.co.uk) for every day your child is absent from school. Thank you.

#### **Spring Term Clubs...**

Monday 12th January, 3.30-4.30pm - Dance with Eve and Filmmaking Clubs starting  
Tuesday 13th January, 3.30-4.30pm - KS1 Magical Maths Club starting  
Tuesday 13th January, 3.30-4.30pm - Years 4-6 Supersports Club with Ross Neary continues  
Wednesday 14th January, 3.30-4.30pm - Years 1-3 Art Club starting  
Wednesday 14th January, 3.30-4.30pm - Choir Club continues  
Thursday 15th January, 3.30-4.30pm - KS2 Magical Maths Club Starting  
**Thursday 15th January - No Years 1-3 Supersports Club with Ross Neary**  
Friday 16th January, 3.30-4.30pm - Years 4-6 Art Club Starting

#### **Diary dates for next week commencing 12th January...**

Monday 12th January - Choir at Young Voices, Birmingham  
Wednesday 14th January, 2.45-3.20pm - SEND Parents Tea and Cake event  
Thursday 15th January - Auditions for High Ash Music Concert  
Friday 16th January, 2.55pm - KS2 Star Assembly, Invitation only. Doors open at 2.45pm

#### **Kate Goodger**

Mrs. Kate Goodger  
Headteacher

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