



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Generosity

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

28th November 2025

Every child is a treasure - small in size, growing in God's love.

Diary Dates

Monday 1st December – Christmas Decoration Day. Wear a Christmas outfit (PTFA – donation for chocolate tombola)

Friday 5th December - Christmas Fayre 3:30pm - 5:30pm

Monday 8th December – Lower School singing group to sing at Woodland View Care home

Monday 8th December – Christmas Concert 6pm (Upper School & Lower School singing groups)

Wednesday 10th December – Upper School singing group to sing at Woodland View Care home

Thursday 11th December - 2:30pm Shackadell nativity

Thursday 11th December – Save the Children Christmas jumper day

Monday 15th December - 9:45am & 1:45pm Christmas Services, St Mary's Church

Wednesday 17th December - Christmas dinner

Thursday 18th December – Rock Steady bands Christmas concert

Thursday 18th December - Christmas parties

Friday 19th December – Last day of autumn term. School finishes at 1pm.

Tuesday 6th January 2026 – Children return to school

Wednesday 28th January – Danes and Puddlebridge Classes to visit Bayfordbury Observatory 5pm

Since our previous newsletter, so much has happened in school and out and now we seem to be accelerating towards the Christmas festivities! Our whole school value is **generosity** which is about more than just giving things away - it's about sharing our time, kindness, and support with others. Together, these small moments of giving help build a stronger, happier school environment for all. There are some ideas towards the end of this newsletter about how you might wish to explore this value together with your child or children at home.

Last week, Years Five and Six had the chance to share some of the highlights of their **PGL residential trip** with the school and their parents in a special assembly. Their trip was before the half term break; the children really did have a fantastic time. Please enjoy the photos later in this newsletter as well as the film which we have now shared on the PGL post on our school website.

We have had a busy few weeks since half term. Our **Service of Remembrance** was very well attended and, we are sure you'll agree, was a very moving service. Danes and Puddlebridge Classes have enjoyed a visit to **The British Museum** to support their historical learning about the Ancient Egyptians and, last week, the whole school enjoyed **Maths Week** – please enjoy finding out more about this later in this newsletter.

Our **football team** have played in two tournaments; we really are incredibly proud of them. You can find out about how they got in in the sports updates as well as reading about a recent **Year Six rowing event** that some of our children took part in.

We hope that everyone enjoyed the three-day weekend last weekend – everyone certainly deserved the **occasional day** on Monday as attendance across all classes this term has been excellent. Next week sees the beginning of Christmas in school with **Decoration Day** on Monday and the **PTFA Christmas Fayre** after school on Friday. There is certainly something very special about the run-up to Christmas at Aston St. Mary's!

Have a great weekend and thank you for your continued support.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 2nd September 2025 to Friday 19th December 2025

Half Term – Monday 27th October 2025– Friday 31st October 2025

Occasional day – Monday 24th November 2026 – School closed

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 6th January 2026 to Friday 27th March 2026

Half Term – Monday 16th February 2026– Friday 20th February 2026

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 14th April 2026 to Friday 17th July 2026

Bank Holiday – Monday 4th May 2026 – School closed

Half term – Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026

INSET DAYS (School closed)

Inset day – Monday 1st September 2025

Occasional day – Monday 24th November 2025

Inset day – Monday 5th January 2026

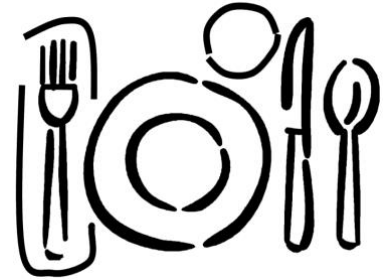
Inset day – Monday 13th April 2026

Inset day – Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st July 2026

School Meals

To order school meals, please log onto your School Gateway account via the website or the app.

DINNER MONEY FEES £3.55 per meal



Please be reminded that you can use the closed email address should you need to contact us out of hours.

closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Thank you to everyone who donated to the poppy appeal and to the Year Six volunteers for selling the poppy merchandise. As a school, we raised an impressive £320.59.

House Points

Canterbury



274

St. Paul's



286

St. Albans



218

Coventry



261

A Thought and a Prayer about Generosity:

True generosity is not measured by the size of what we give, but by the love and intention behind it. When we give our time, kindness, or help to others, we create ripples of goodness that reach far beyond what we can see. Generosity reminds us that we are all connected - and that even the smallest act of giving can make a big difference.

Loving God,

Thank You for the blessings we share each day.

Open our hearts to be generous in spirit -
to give freely, to share joyfully, and to care deeply for others.

Help us to see the needs around us and to respond with
kindness.

May our giving bring light to others and gratitude to our own
hearts.

Amen.

Notices

Celebrating Attendance

We are delighted to share that attendance so far this term has been excellent across the school and significantly higher than the national average. **Pupils at Aston St. Mary's have achieved an impressive 98.9%** compared to 95.1% nationally.

Thank you for working with us to ensure that your child is able to make the best possible progress by being in school every day (unless they are unwell) and therefore avoiding gaps in their learning.

Well done everyone!



Aston St. Mary's is a **NUT and SESAME FREE ZONE.**

Please ensure that packed lunches do not contain any products containing nuts or sesame (including products such as Nutella, humus, tahini and sesame seeds on bread/breadsticks).



Lost Property

Please make sure that items of clothing are clearly named – this enables us to return lost items to their owners. Our lost property box is frequently overflowing with un-named items – coats, jumpers, hats, gloves and, sometimes, even shoes and trainers.



ASTON ST MARY'S PTFA

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2025
3.15PM-5.30PM

CRAFTS - GAMES- RAFFLE
TOMBOLA - LETTERS TO SANTA
MULLED WINE - HOT DOGS- TEA ROOM
BISCUIT DECORATING

ASTON ST MARY'S PTFA

Elf Workshop & Mrs Claus' Kitchen

chocolate fountain
Biscuit decorating
marshmallow reindeers

Elf treats
Personalised
baubles & gift tags
Letters to Santa
with response!

£7

Sports Updates

Football Champions

Stevenage and District Primary Schools FA Autumn Term Tournament

Having won our group earlier in the term, Aston reached the finals on Friday 17th October. **Thank you to Louie in Year Five** for writing this report about our road to victory.

Aston v Woolenwick 1-0

We started off a bit slow with no goals scored until our winning goal. It was a lovely ball over the top by **Vaaris** and what a goal by **Theo** in the bottom corner! Woolenwick had some really good shots, but they were stopped by our amazing goalkeeper – **Lucas**. So that was it. 1-0 to Aston.

Aston v Lodge Farm 1-0

We had another slow start with no goals scored. We had a chance, but we missed. We had one more chance to score. What a goal! **Theo** scored again by a great pass from **Ethan**. So, we won again. What a great start to the tournament for us!

Aston v Moss Bury 2-0

We were off to a much better, quicker start with a goal scored by **Ethan** from another great pass by **Vaaris**. There were no shots for **Lucas** to save – still a clean sheet for him! We were off to the semi-final. Let's win this, we thought!

Aston v Giles 3-0

We had another great start with three more goals scored by **Theo**. We had even more amazing shots, but they just would not go in the goal. There second half kicked off – still no saves for **Lucas**! So that was that. We were through to the final. **Bertie** was solid on the wing throughout, running up and down.

Aston v Codicote 1-0

So, we kicked off – everyone was nervous. Who would win? We were all hustling for our team. In the last four minutes of the game, **Jack** took a fab corner and me, **James** and **Theo** all jumped. What a header by **James**! Top corner. I was surprised that it did not hurt. We took a corner, and we held it in the corner. They got a last-minute free kick – a great block by **Ethan**. **We won! We are the champions!**

Opinion

My man of the match would be **Theo**. I think he showed great skill and scored some great goals. **James** needs a mention too for scoring the winning goal. I don't think we could have done anything without our wonderful coach, **Rene**.

Reported by Louie



Sports Updates

Football Champions (again!)

EFL Kids Cup Tournament



Once again, our football team has proved themselves to be a force to be reckoned with within Stevenage. We competed in the EFL Kids Cup Tournament on Friday 21st November. In our group, we were victorious with two draws and three wins – achieving a goal difference of 11. This secured our place in the semi-final against Giles; we won this match 2:1 and headed straight to the finals where we were victorious against Roebuck. Now, we are looking forward to the next **regional stage** of the competition in March where we **will represent Stevenage FC**.

Well done boys and thank you, once again, to **Rene** for his fantastic coaching.
We may be small, but we are mighty!

Year Six Indoor Rowing Competition



On Tuesday 25th November, a team of four boys and four girls from Year Six competed in an indoor rowing competition at Barnwell School. Competing against eleven other teams, the children were a credit to our school. They were really supportive of each other, and everyone really did give it their all – they were amazing. This was a wonderful opportunity for the children to participate in an activity which most of them had not tried before – well done team Aston!

Enrichment

A Visit to The British Museum

On Friday 14th November, Danes and Puddlebridge Classes enjoyed a visit to The British Museum. This supported their historical learning about the Ancient Egyptians. We began our day by exploring the Egyptian galleries. As usual, the children were a credit to Aston St. Mary's; they showed such an interest in all the artefacts and exhibits. After this, the children were delighted to see the Rosetta Stone – they had learnt in school about how it was used to decipher the previously unreadable Egyptian scripts, unlocking the language and culture of ancient Egypt.



Later in the morning, we had the opportunity to become experts in deciphering ancient Egyptian tomb paintings. We joined other schools for a presentation which helped us to unpick small details in paintings from the tomb of Nebamum which gave us clues as to what daily life might have been like in Egyptian times. During this session, we were incredibly proud by the level of engagement of our children – they were keen to offer their thoughts and ideas as well as speaking clearly and confidently in front of a larger audience.



After lunch, the children enjoyed a much-anticipated trip to the museum gift shop before we headed back to school – tired after such an exciting day out!

Enrichment

Year Five and Six Residential PGL – Marchants Hill (20th – 24th October 2025)



Maths Week



Starting on Monday 17th November, Aston celebrated Maths Week England. Maths Week is a national event designed to make maths enjoyable, accessible and relevant to everyone, helping children see how maths exists in the world around them and in their everyday lives.

In our launch assembly, we explored what maths can be and how it is all around us. We even realised we had already used maths several times that morning without noticing! We also discussed how adults use maths in their daily lives. We were set the challenge of thinking of a job that doesn't use any maths at all. We decided this was impossible, because almost every job requires understanding time, money, or both.

Throughout the week, we were lucky enough to welcome several visitors into school to talk about their careers and how they use maths every day. Chris Ford, Daisy's dad, explained the maths involved in being a Platform Engineer and helped us understand how servers work by comparing them to pizzas! Mrs Skull then showed us the many ways maths is used in forest school and the natural world. Later in the week, Jayne's mum, Ade Fabunmi, talked to us about how she uses maths in investment banking to compare and measure risks. She explained how maths helps her to spot patterns to prevent problems and to make sure people follow the rules. Finally, Sophie Nolan, Tom's mum, visited to share how she uses maths and data analytics in her work, using ice cream sales to show how shops use weather data to decide when to order more.



Puddlebridge and Danes also took part in the Times Tables Rock Stars *England Rocks* tournament, and we are incredibly proud of their achievements. Our school came 8th in the whole country out of 4,356 schools, and 1st out of 513 schools in the East of England! Out of 28,456 classes taking part, Danes were outstanding and finished 24th in England, while Puddlebridge worked brilliantly and achieved an impressive 345th place. What fantastic results for both classes!



In lessons, the whole school focused on making links to maths in as much of our learning as possible. In a range of subjects, from art to science to PE, teachers helped us spot the maths around us and use it in our work. Whether we were measuring, looking for patterns, estimating, or problem-solving, we found that maths connects to almost everything we do. Maths Week helped us see that maths isn't just a subject on the timetable – it's an important part of all our learning!

"I enjoyed the unique change in the timetable to fit in all the maths activities."

Jadon, Year Five



"I enjoyed how we found a maths link for each subject."

Chizi, Year Four

"I liked it when the parents came in and spoke to us about their jobs. It helped me to understand how they use maths."

Toby, Year Four

Class News

Shackadell Class



Shackadell class have loved maths week. We started the week in our whole school assembly thinking about all of the different ways that we use maths every day. We started our week reading 'Abigail' by Catherine Rayner. It is all about a giraffe who loves to count with her friends. At the end of the book, they attempt to count all of the stars in the sky – an impossible job! We spent some time focussing on star constellations and counting how many stars make up these constellations.

In our maths lessons this week, we have continued to look at the parts and whole of objects and numbers, especially focussing on the composition of the numbers 3, 4 and 5. We had a group of four children and sorted them in different ways looking at how 4 can be made up of 2 and 2 as well as 3 and 1. We also played some fun maths games and printed different compositions of 4.



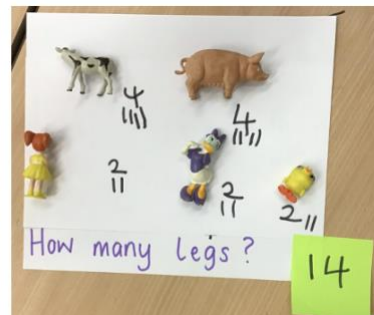
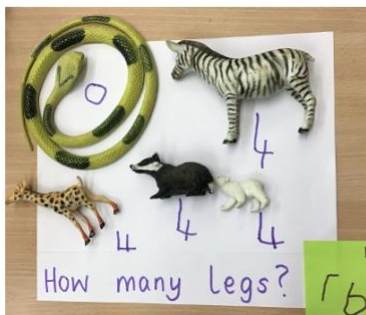
In 'Drawing club' this week we have been reading The Gingerbread Man. We used lots of maths skills when following a recipe to make our own gingerbread. We had to carefully **measure** our ingredients. When we decorated our gingerbread men, we thought about **how many** of each body part they have and that they **make up a whole** man!



During 'Adventure time' we really enjoy using different **shapes** to make things. I think some of us will be future engineers as we are really good at planning our structures and creating amazing buildings!



This week we really enjoyed the book 'How many legs' by Kes Gray and Jim Field. The story talks about lots of different animals that go to a party and keeps track of how many legs they have **altogether**! We used our own small world resources and counted **how many** legs we had **altogether** on our page.



Class News

Peartree Class

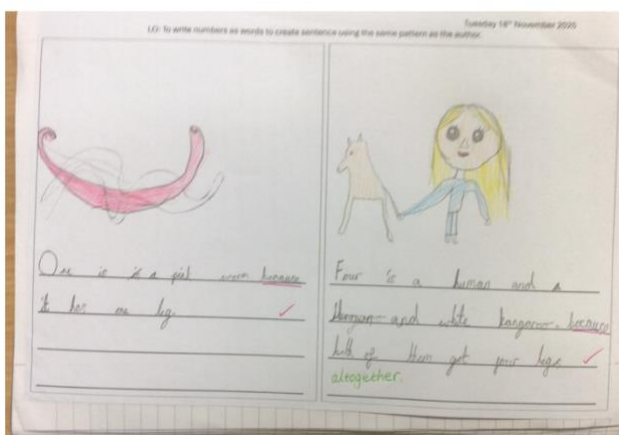
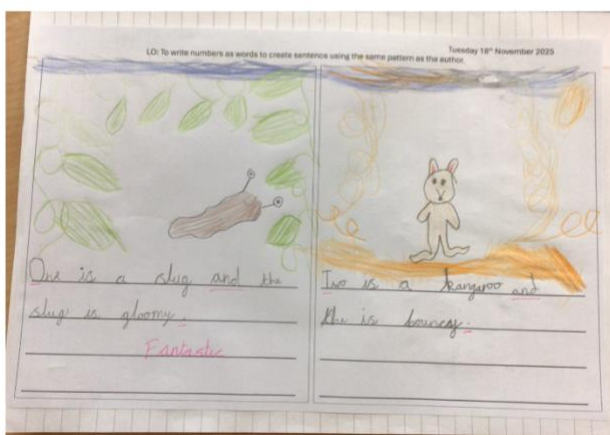
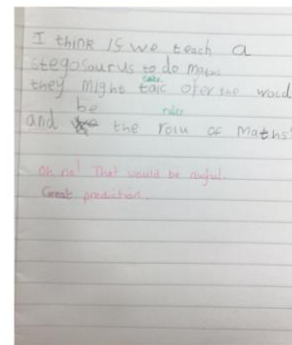
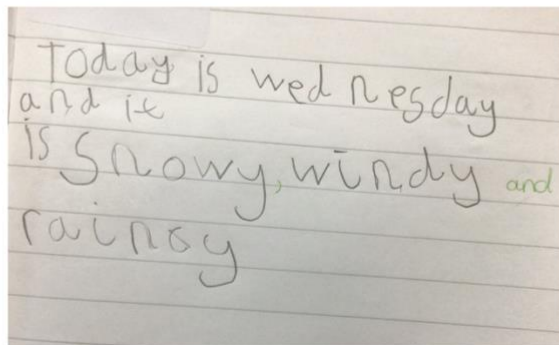
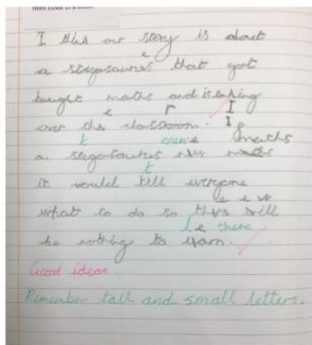
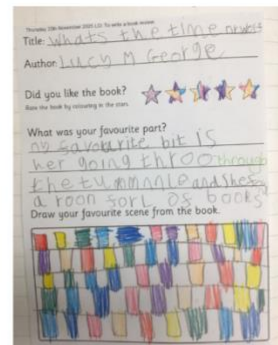
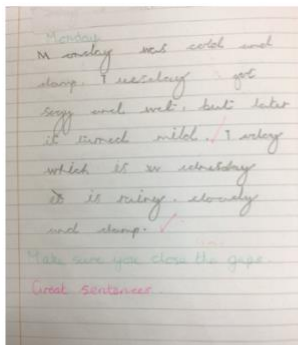
What a lovely week we have had! We have looked at five different maths themed books during our English lessons and have used them to produce some fantastic writing.

One is a Snail – We wrote our own version of some of the pages in this book, using different animals.

Mr Wolf's Week – We wrote diary entries about the weather.

Never Teach a Stegosaurus to do Sums – We made predictions based on the title and cover of the book, before we read it.

What's the Time Mr Wolf – We wrote a book review about this book and said whether we would recommend this to someone else to read.



In computing, we have been using our Chromebooks to sort different shapes depending on their properties. In science, for the start of our 'Animal Habitats' topic, we designed our own zoos by drawing measured enclosures/buildings and then working out the cost for each square centimetre. In PE, we have been learning a dance routine and have been sequencing moves to an eight-beat count.

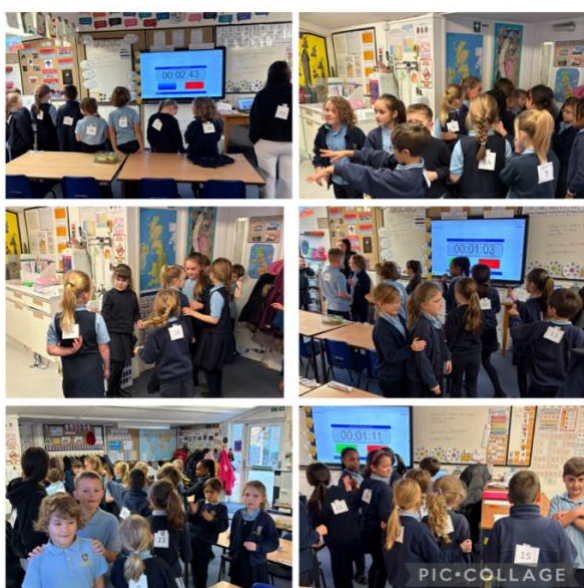
Who knew that maths is everywhere?

Class News

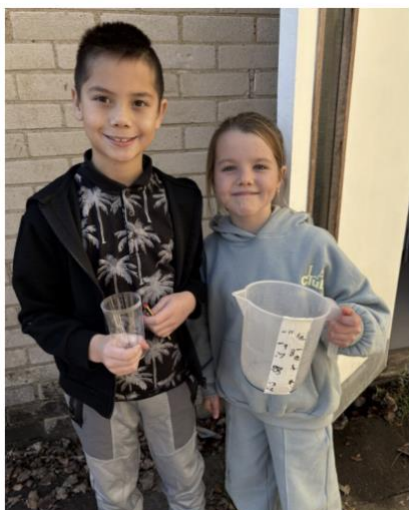
Haffydown Class

In Haffydown, we had an amazing time celebrating **Maths Week**. In English, we dived into three exciting maths themed texts and were inspired to create our own imaginative short stories based on **Double the Fun** by Tony Bradman.

In PSHE, we put our teamwork skills to the test by sorting ourselves into number order using only the hidden numbers on our backs and non-verbal communication. It was challenging, funny and a brilliant way to strengthen our friendships while learning why listening to each other is so important when working towards a shared goal.



In P.E., we brought even more energy to our **Thriller themed dance**, counting in beats of eight and adding dramatic moves, and in French we became **data detectives**, collecting information about everyone's favourite colours and using our French numbers to count and analyse what we discovered. In handwriting, we practised writing numbers as words, and in art we let our creativity shine by **designing our own robots** from different shapes and decorating them in unique and colourful styles. In maths, we explored length using rulers, metre sticks and trundle wheels to **measure the playground**, and then enjoyed one of the most exciting lessons of the term: **capacity!** We poured, measured and estimated with water, turning the classroom into a fun and very wet science lab.



We absolutely loved Maths Week, and one of the most inspiring parts was welcoming parents into our classroom to share how they use maths in their jobs. Their stories helped us see just how important and exciting maths can be.

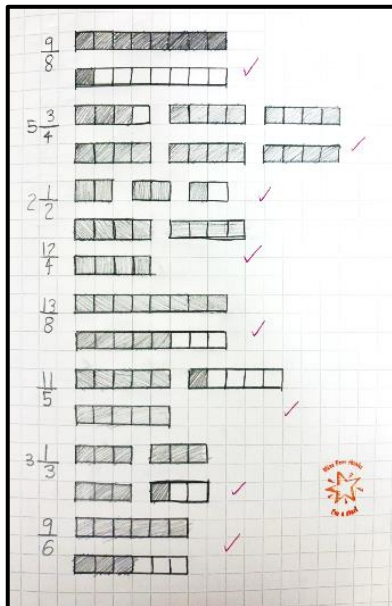
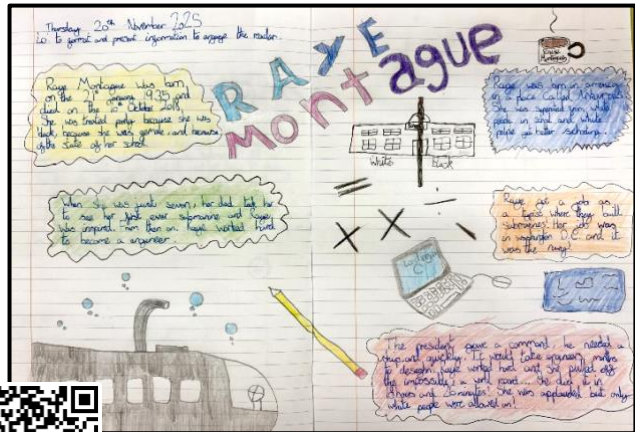
Thank you for organising this for us Miss Pear!

Class News

Puddlebridge Class

Puddlebridge have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in Maths Week! We found it exciting to spot mathematical ideas in places we hadn't noticed before.

In English, we read **The Girl With a Mind for Math**, the inspiring story of engineer **Raye Montague**. Raye was a pioneering engineer who, despite facing discrimination, became the first person to design a ship using a computer. Her determination, creativity and incredible use of maths helped change the future of engineering. We worked together to perform the story, which you can watch by scanning the QR code.



In maths, we continued our learning on fractions and made great progress in representing **mixed numbers and improper fractions**. We used diagrams and practical examples to help us understand how these different forms link together.

In history, we used the Chromebooks to **research a mathematician** of our choice. This also linked to our computing lessons, where we learned how to check whether online information is reliable or not.

In art, we explored **Islamic geometric patterns** and learned that every design begins with a circle – a symbol of unity and the centre from which all else grows. The circle is then divided into equal sectors, often in multiples of four, five or six, which shapes the pattern that follows. We even had a go at creating our own beautiful octagrams!

It has been a fantastic week of creativity, curiosity and mathematical thinking across Puddlebridge!



Class News

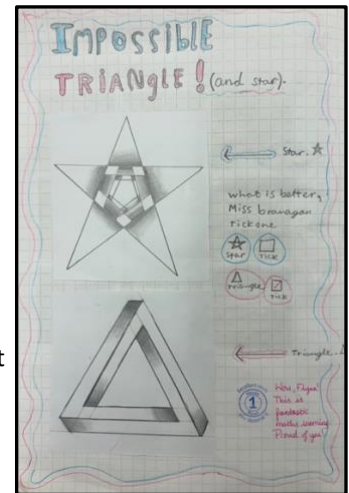
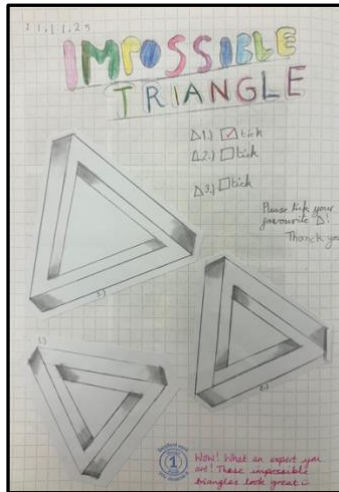
Danes Class

What a fantastic week we've had celebrating Maths Week England in Danes Class!

Across the week, we have enjoyed our usual range of subjects but exclusively with a maths focus.

In art, we looked at how we can construct an **impossible triangle**. First, we had to draw an accurate equilateral triangle using rulers and protractors – it was imperative that these were accurate. Then, we added construction lines to help guide us to create this impossible triangle illusion.

What a lot of fun we had!

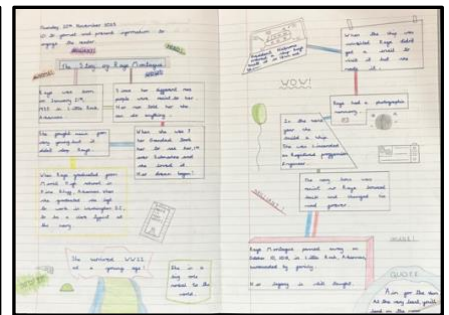
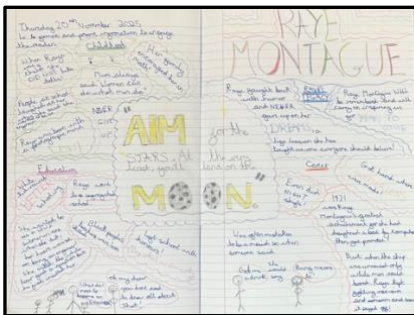


Danes Class have proved to be fraction experts! We've developed our **fractional reasoning skills** in a variety of ways including creating number lines. After plotting the benchmarks of $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$, we had to compare a variety of fractions to be able to order them accurately on a number line. Some were really quite tricky and required us to explain our reasoning to each other very clearly.



Scan Me!

Raye Montague, a trail-blazing engineer, has been the focus of our English learning for Maths Week. We spent the week learning about her incredible achievements as well as the set-backs she encountered throughout her life through Julia Finley Mosca's book **'The Girl With a Mind for Math: The Story of Raye Montague'**. Our learning journey began by exploring new vocabulary and concepts such as segregation and the Civil Rights Movement in America. We then memorised and recited the entire story – scan the QR code to listen. We ended the week by creating some eye-catching double-page spreads to showcase our learning in a visual and informative way. She's certainly inspired us to persevere and not let glass ceilings stop us from achieving our dreams.



Our PSHE learning was a particular highlight of the week. In true apprentice style, we worked in groups to **manufacture a paper product** worthy of Miss Branagan's, Mrs Avis' and Mrs Branagan's investment! We worked as a group and began with a budget of £1500. With this, we had to decide how much of it to invest in insurance – we could either get full-cover, theft and fire cover or no cover at all. Then, we chose what resources to purchase. There was a buzz in the air as we worked quickly to meet our deadline. During our production time, cards were randomly drawn to let us know whether there had been any unfortunate events such as a fire, a theft or flood in our premises. Those groups who had purchased the expensive full cover knew they had nothing to worry about whereas those of us who had risked only investing in partial cover were nervous! We also had opportunities to earn promotions through hard work. At the end, our products were assessed based on quality, consistency and desirability. A good sales pitch, advertising campaign and enticing promotions were crucial in securing investment.



GENEROSITY

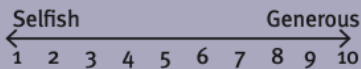
HOME SCHOOL VALUES

This term we will be focussing in school on the value GENEROSITY. We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

TALK TOGETHER about Generosity

When we think about **generosity** we usually think about being **generous** with money or possessions. However, we can also be **generous** with our time, our gifts and our abilities. **Generous** people often say that they receive much more than they give. Perhaps this is because when someone is **generous** to us, it makes us want to be **generous** in return. The opposite of being **generous** is being selfish. What kind of person would you prefer to have as a friend?

- How would you describe yourself on this scale?



- Where would other members of your family put you on the scale and what are their reasons?
- Who is the most **generous** person you know?



READ TOGETHER...

The Widow's Mite

Jesus had been teaching in the Temple. But now he sat down near the treasury and watched as the many visitors to the Temple passed by and dropped money into the collecting box to help with God's work.

The rich men dressed in fine robes threw in handfuls of coins as they passed, without a thought. But then a poor widow came by, paused, and placed just two mites (tiny coins) into the box.

Jesus called his disciples to him and told them what he had seen.

Then he said to them, "Let me tell you, this poor widow gave more than all those people who threw many coins into the treasury. The wealthy men gave just a small part of their riches which made no difference to them. But the widow gave all that she had."

You see, God is more interested in what is in the heart of the giver than the size of their gift.

Bible story based on Mark 12:41-44

A Mite in Jesus' time was a small brass coin worth 1/128th of a denarius. Typically a labourer was paid 1 denarius for a day's work.



In Britain, many years ago, a coin called a mite was in general use and worth half a farthing, a very tiny amount of money.

THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"God loves a cheerful giver"
2 Corinthians 9:7

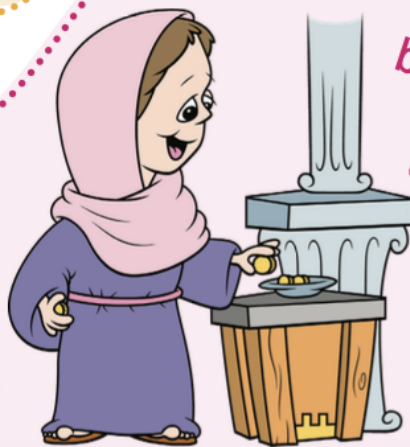
New King James Version® of the Bible



? QUIZ

Lost Letters

Which letters are missing from the alphabet? Arrange them to make a word from the story.



x l s h k
d p j
b f r y
u q a
w
z j g c
o s n v

☆ HALL OF FAME

A Generous Saint

Nicholas grew up long ago in a poor part of Turkey. His father earned just enough to provide for the needs of his family but many people in the town were extremely poor.

One day something extraordinary happened. A wealthy relative, who Nicholas barely knew, suddenly died and left him a vast fortune. Overnight Nicholas became rich, so rich that he felt very uncomfortable about having so much money when many of the townsfolk barely had enough to eat. But Nicholas knew that the families were proud and they would not want to accept money that they had not earned. He needed to find a way to help them in secret.

So in the dark of night, Nicholas crept through the town leaving parcels of food, clothing and money for the families most in need. He helped one family with three daughters several times. The father was so curious about the mysterious benefactor, that he was determined to stay awake and discover who was being so **generous**. As Nicholas quietly left his gift at the door of their tiny home the man leapt out and chased Nicholas until he finally caught up. Nicholas was embarrassed and begged the man not to give away his secret. The father promised. But he was so happy and grateful that he just couldn't help telling people, and soon the whole town knew about Nicholas' **generosity**.

Nicholas continued to live in the same town and he continued to be **generous** to every one in need. Every December he rewarded the children who had been good during the year by secretly delivering presents whilst they were asleep. To this day Nicholas is remembered in countries across the world when children receive gifts on December 5th, St Nicholas' Day.



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE



The Generositree

The fruit of the generositree are blessings.

Think of something **generous** that you could do that would bless someone and make them happy. Then do it.

Design and make a colourful exotic looking fruit to represent the blessing and take it to school to hang on the Generositree.



FAMILY FOCUS

Secret St Nick

Each member of the family could decide on someone that they think deserves a special present. Find some pots for each person and begin to save a small amount each week.

When December comes buy presents that will make your special person smile or that they will find useful. Wrap the gifts as creatively as you can and write their name on a homemade label. Deliver in secret on 5th December, St Nicholas' Day.



FASCINATING FACTS

Leading the Pack

Lieutenant Baden-Powell was a brave soldier in the British Army and served in India and Africa. He was an expert in wilderness survival skills, like hunting, making fires and building rafts. To help new soldiers he wrote a small manual. A version of this became 'Scouting for Boys' and gave him the idea of setting up the Scouting movement.

Today, worldwide, millions of children and young people are Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides, Brownies or Rainbows.

- In the UK over 160,000 volunteers run Scouting and Guiding groups
- They **generously** give over 20 million hours of service each year
- Many parents also use their skills to help children to earn badges



U9 (YR4) GIRLS & BOYS WANTED FOR WATTON YOUTH FC

**No experience necessary,
new and anxious players
welcome.**

- FA Qualified Coaches
- Full DBS & First Aid
- Monday training sessions
(Watton at Stone)
- Saturday Matches

Contact:

**Derek Hill 07974 651625 or
Linda Goodchild 07963 784778**