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AND RESOURCED PROVISION FOR  
HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN  
Headteacher: Mrs C Findlay

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

We have reached the end of another busy half-term! We are particularly proud of our Year 6 pupils who worked so hard last week during the SATS tests. The more relaxed week in Grittleton on the residential, or here in school, is very well-deserved.

#### Spare Plants

Gardening club is in full swing after school on a Friday and the children have already made a huge difference in clearing away the weeds in the sensory garden. If you have any spare plants at home that you would be willing to donate to the gardening club, either perennials or summer bedding, they would be gratefully received!

#### Safeguarding

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to hear from a paediatrician at my local heads cluster meeting, once again talking about the dangers of smartphones for our children. She has seen first-hand in the hospital, the impact that children having mobile phones has and it made me emotional hearing her talk. She is an advocate of the group 'Smartphone Free Childhood' and urges parents to think twice before giving their child a smartphone. As she said at the meeting, there is an irony in the fact that parents often think that providing their child with a phone keeps them safer as they can contact them easily and track them at any time, when in fact what they are doing is letting the world have access to their child through the device in their pocket.

I say this not to make you feel like a bad parent (I gave my now older teenagers smartphones when they turned 11). I say this because the current evidence is that this might not have been the best move. We all think we are checking our children's phones and that we have the right controls in place, but I have never yet spoken to a parent about their child viewing pornography or online bullying who has been aware of it. I urge you to take a look at the Smartphone Free Childhood website, but I also warn you that some of the statistics are frightening.

***When we give our children access to the world in their pocket, we give the whole world access to our children. <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>***

I hope that you all have a good week with your children over the half-term and look forward to welcoming them back to an action-packed half-term after the break.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Findlay  
Headteacher

## **News from the Year Teams**

### **Year 3**

*Time flies when you're having fun and Year 3 have certainly been enjoying all the learning this half term. Last week the children took a pleasant walk along Cove Brook closely observing their surroundings, noting both human and physical features. This week we have shared some of our learning with Year 4 and they were very impressed with how hard we have been working. On Tuesday in athletics, we created different activities to improve our running, jumping and throwing skills. There were so many great ideas and we enjoyed sharing these with Year 5.*

*In maths we have been revisiting multiplication and division focusing on the 4x 8x and 3x table. Fluency with these important facts makes such a difference and helps children to understand number and number relationships, and to see patterns in numbers. These skills will help them to master key concepts and move quickly through more complex maths problems with confidence. We are encouraging the children to use TTRs and play on 'Garage' as this is really helpful as it creates a heatmap showing the particular facts that the children need to work on. The algorithm learns which facts these are and adapts the Garage games to help the child to learn them.*

*We have been exploring peculiar plants in English and have enjoyed learning some interesting facts about many different plants. Did you know there is plant called the toilet shrew pitcher plant? The children have then written incredible information texts about their own imaginary plants and tried hard to organise the writing in to paragraphs.*

*In PSHE, we have started learning about fire safety and been thinking about who can help keep us safe.*

*Inspired by the work of Pablo Picasso in art, we have designed and made our own fabulous clay fish. We practised different joining techniques and also cutting and combining shapes to make recognisable forms.*

*In RE we have been learning about how water is used as a symbol in both Christianity and Hinduism. We enjoyed creating our own symbols for water and there were some very creative ideas.*

*We hope the children have a lovely half term holiday.*

### **Year 4**

*This term has been a short one, but we have certainly packed a lot in!*

*Year 4 have been exploring the topic of 'Good and Evil' in RE, linking this to the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. They have learnt to talk about the weather in French and have had a go at writing a weather report. In music, we have been finding out about pitch. The children have been learning to identify melodic shape by listening carefully to steps, leaps and repeats in melodies. They have explored playing and composing with notes from the F major scale.*

*English has continued to be all about 'The Firework-Maker's Daughter' and it has been great to find out how the story ends! This week, we have been reflecting on Lila's journey throughout the story and what she learns from her adventure.*

*There has continued to be plenty of times tables practice in Year 4 – we are so impressed by the effort that everyone has put in to this recently. Many thanks for the support that you have been giving with this at home. The children have had an opportunity to try out the Multiplication Tables Check practice this week so that they know exactly what to expect. We are planning to carry out the actual MTC in the week of 9<sup>th</sup> June, so we will have another chance to have a go at the practice version when we come back after half term. Please do get in touch with Mrs James or your child's class teacher if you have any questions or concerns about the MTC.*

*We hope that you have a lovely half term break and look forward to seeing the children again after the holidays when we will be learning about all about the Ruthless Romans!*

### Year 5

*Firstly, a massive well done to 5G and 5D on their amazing class assemblies. It has been lovely to see their confidence grow throughout the year and lots of children pushing themselves out of their comfort zone.*

*In English, Year 5 have been reading the poem 'The Highwayman'. We have enjoyed writing love letters from the Highwayman to Bess and turning the poem into a story. The children have shown how they can make excellent word choices, vary their sentences and use speech punctuation correctly.*

*In maths, we have been doing A LOT of problem solving, applying our knowledge of all four operations. We have focussed particularly on solving problems with money, particularly trying to find change. The children are working carefully through the problems and checking their answers using estimation and the inverse.*

*In topic, we have been throwing ourselves into our art topic which has involved us using a range of sketching techniques. We have used these sketching techniques to draw pencil drawings of volcanoes. We have been amazed by the results, lots of which were shown in the two assemblies recently.*

*Next half term, Year 5 are looking forward to finding out their buddies, sports day, welcoming the fire service, doing PE sessions with Cove Senior school, starting our new topic and much more!*

*As always thank you for your continued support with your child's home learning, we hope you all have a great half term!*

### Year 6

*Hooray! The Year 6's survived SATs week and we couldn't be prouder of their efforts. They really did give it their best shot and we look forward to seeing how they got on and sharing this with you later in July.*

*Our first residential visit to Grittleton has been a huge success! Fun has been had by all and the weather extremely kind. Once the children have recovered from their action packed week, they will hopefully share with you more details about their adventures.*

*For those whom remained at school, they have enjoyed an activity week. They have been pond dipping, frisbee throwing, t-shirt designing and exploring cool graffiti style art. A trip to the park and various outdoor fun, has kept them entertained.*

*Thank you for your continued support, next half term is extremely busy in Year 6 with lots to look forward to as they start their final few weeks here at Manor Junior School. We will keep you updated with our various events asap, but for now enjoy the half term break!*