



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2 2025

Overdale
Junior School



As we come to the end of the Autumn term, it feels like the perfect moment to celebrate what has been an uplifting and memorable few months for our school community. Our children have continued to shine, showing resilience, responsibility, and respect in everything they do. From their growing confidence in the classroom to the kindness they show one another each day, they have truly embodied the values that make Overdale Junior School such a special place.

One of the highlights of this term has been seeing the children take real ownership of their learning. Their determination, teamwork, and willingness to support one another have been inspiring. These qualities have not only helped them achieve their personal goals but have strengthened the sense of unity and pride across our whole school.

We were also delighted to have welcomed Mrs Holmes to Overdale Junior School this term and it has been wonderful to work together closely with Mr Evans over at Overdale Infant School this term. Our first joint occasion, Remembrance Day, was a really thought provoking and powerful event and we look to the future of the Overdales as we can take part in more combined celebrations together.

Another standout moment was our fantastic series of Christmas discos, which were a huge success. The children had an amazing time, and it was wonderful to see so much joy and festive spirit. A heartfelt thank you to our brilliant PTA members for their help with organising and supporting these events. They truly helped make this term feel extra special.

As we now head into the festive season, I hope each of you finds time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the company of family and friends. Whether you celebrate Christmas or simply enjoy the winter break, may your days be filled with warmth, laughter, and moments to treasure. I am very much looking forward to rejoining everyone in the New Year, ready to embrace new challenges and opportunities together.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy winter holiday.

See you in 2026.
Mrs Cross
Head of School



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What an exciting and enriching term it has been in Year 3!

The children have thrown themselves into every challenge with enthusiasm, curiosity and a growing sense of **Respect, Responsibility and Resilience**. We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and it has been wonderful to see our youngest children settling in so well to life at OJS.

A Journey Through the Stone Age

Our history learning has truly come alive this term. The children explored *Stone Age Boy*, used clues to identify different eras, and demonstrated impressive recall during quizzes and discussions. Stone Age Day was a real highlight: pupils built Mesolithic and Neolithic shelters in the forest, created clay pots using traditional techniques, and produced striking cave-style artwork.

Our trip to Bradgate Park deepened this learning even further. Children handled artefacts, tried spear throwing, experimented with cave painting and imagined life as nomadic hunters. Their behaviour, curiosity and teamwork were outstanding throughout the day.

Creative Minds at Work

Art has been a vibrant part of our curriculum. Inspired by L.S. Lowry, the children explored shading techniques, mixed colours with care and created atmospheric street scenes using a limited palette. They also produced beautiful Parisian architecture sketches for European Languages Day and crafted Christmas decorations now proudly displayed at St Mary's Church.

In Design & Technology, pupils investigated how products are designed and improved. They tested paper aeroplanes, evaluated juicers and designed their own inventions with impressive creativity.

Food, Nutrition and Practical Skills

Our Food Routes sessions have been a huge success. Children have made mince pies, rainbow pizzas, fruity kebabs, Welsh rarebit, healthy wraps and traditional rock cakes. Along the way, they have learned about balanced diets, safe chopping techniques, hygiene routines and the importance of nutritious ingredients. Their growing independence in the kitchen shows real **Responsibility**.

Reading, Writing and Language

A major celebration this term has been the year group's fantastic reading progress. Many children have reached personal milestones, and as a cohort they have shown real commitment to reading at home and logging their progress. Their dedication reflects true **Resilience**.

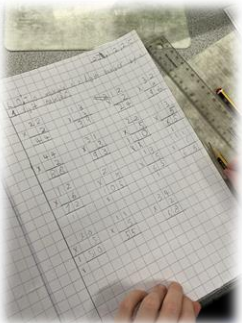
In English, pupils have developed their descriptive writing, using senses and atmosphere to bring settings to life. They have practised punctuating direct speech, written character descriptions and explored new vocabulary. We also celebrated European Languages Day by surveying the many languages spoken in our community and creating Paris-inspired artwork.

Maths: Building Strong Foundations

Across the term, children have strengthened their understanding of multiplication and division using Numicon and other concrete resources. They have explored how to multiply by multiples of ten, grouped tens and ones, and applied known facts to new problems. Their focus and determination have been excellent.

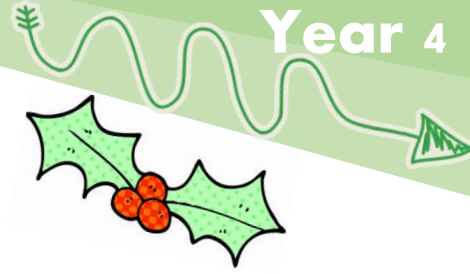
Personal Development and Wellbeing

In PSHE, pupils have reflected on their strengths, qualities and strategies for supporting their mental health. In PE, they have demonstrated **Respect** and teamwork by ensuring everyone is included and working towards shared goals.



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This term in Year 4 has been full of energy, creativity and impressive learning. The children have shown growing **Respect, Responsibility** and **Resilience** in everything they do, and we are delighted to share some of the highlights.

Creative and Practical Learning

Art has been a real strength this term. Children explored abstract portraiture inspired by Picasso and took part in a specialist workshop delivered by a visiting artist. They also celebrated European Languages Day by learning about global carnivals and designing colourful masks.

In Design & Technology, pupils planned and created greeting cards that incorporate simple electrical circuits to make them light up. This project linked beautifully with their Science work on electricity, where they explored open and closed circuits, switches and scientific symbols before applying their knowledge to real products.

Food Routes has offered hands-on experience with cooking and nutrition. Children made spicy chickpea pots, broccoli and basil soup, and tuna fish cakes, learning about spices, food origins, safe chopping techniques and kitchen hygiene along the way.

Reading, Writing and Performance

Year 4 have immersed themselves in rich and imaginative texts including *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Jabberwocky* and *Call Me Lion*. They have produced atmospheric setting descriptions, detailed character writing and suspenseful narratives. Sharing their work with older pupils was a lovely moment of pride and **Respect**. Performance poetry has been a highlight, with children enthusiastically performing limericks and tongue twisters. Regular library visits have supported reading for pleasure, and we continue to encourage families to log home reading on Boom Reader.

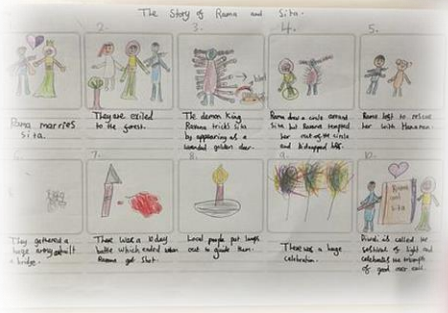
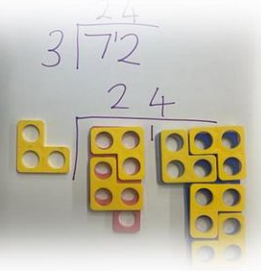
Maths: Growing Confidence

In maths, pupils have tackled multiplication and division, factor pairs, addition and subtraction, and the law of commutativity. They have also used Numicon and the bus stop method to calculate division – even with remainders. Times Tables Rock Stars competitions have boosted motivation, and children have shown real **Resilience** when grappling with challenging concepts.

Personal Development and Community

In PSHE, pupils have reflected on classroom rules, kindness, friendships and how to create a safe, positive learning environment. They have shown maturity and empathy, particularly during joint activities with other year groups.

Special events such as Children in Need, Hello Yellow Day, Christmas celebrations and whole-school performances have added plenty of excitement. PE has been equally active, with children developing ball skills, playing tennis and enjoying outdoor sessions whenever possible.



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What a rich and rewarding term it has been in Year 5. The children have shown impressive **Respect**, **Responsibility** and **Resilience** across all areas of learning, and we are delighted to share some of the highlights from their busy and productive weeks.

Creative Learning and Art Workshops

Art has been a real source of inspiration this term. Children explored the Pop Art movement, experimented with secondary colours and created their own pieces inspired by Andy Warhol's iconic style. They also took part in a specialist workshop led by an artist from 2Queens Studio, producing striking space-themed scratch-art using cross-hatching techniques. Their focus and attention to detail were outstanding.

Greek Day was another creative highlight, with children making clay theatre masks, learning about myths and even writing in the Greek alphabet. These hands-on experiences brought their history learning vividly to life.

Food Routes: Cooking and Nutrition

Food Routes has offered a fantastic range of practical cooking experiences. This term, children have made:

- **Tomato salsa and smashed avocado** while learning about dietary fibre

- **Fish pie** with homemade parsley sauce

- **Macaroni cheese**, exploring how milk is processed

- **Chilli bean potatoes**, discovering how potatoes grow

- **Apple and blackberry crumble** using apples grown in school

Alongside cooking, pupils learned about food origins, safe preparation techniques, hygiene routines and how ingredients are processed. Their independence and teamwork in the kitchen have been excellent.

English: Writing with Purpose

Year 5 have produced some exceptional writing this term. They have:

- Published detailed **non-chronological reports** about Ancient Greece

- Planned and written **diary entries** filled with humour and creativity

- Explored **Greek myths** and used them as inspiration for their own ideas

- Shared their published work with younger pupils, showing real pride and **Respect**

Their writing stamina and vocabulary choices have developed beautifully.

Maths: Building Confidence and Fluency

Fractions have been a major focus, and the children have shown real **Resilience** when tackling tricky concepts such as:

- Mixed numbers and improper fractions

- Multiplication and division

- Using different methods to solve problems

Science: Working Scientifically

Science has been full of hands-on investigation. Children explored:

- **Soluble and insoluble substances**

- **Reversible and irreversible changes**

- **Chemical reactions** using everyday materials

- **Dissolving experiments**, making predictions and observing outcomes

They also learned about different materials and worked scientifically to test variables and record results carefully.

Wider Curriculum Highlights

- In **Geography**, pupils learned to read OS maps and use four-figure grid references.

- In **Computing**, they compared different search engines and discussed how they work.

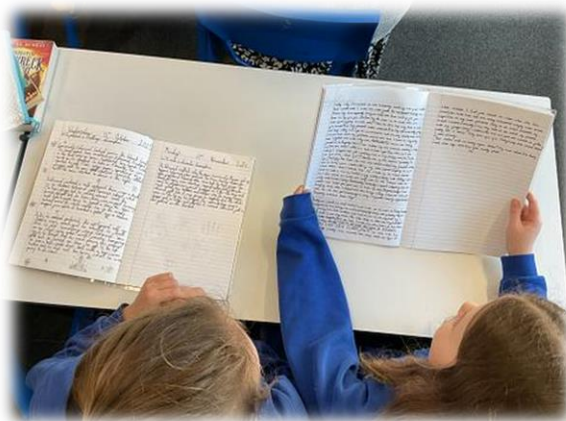
- In **French**, they practised describing the weather.

- In **RE**, they explored key beliefs in Islam.

- In **Dance**, they learned the hand jive — a definite favourite!

- A special **Fire Safety assembly** taught children how to stay safe at home and in the community.

The children enjoyed some shared reading sessions with younger pupils and these were a lovely way to build confidence and connection across year groups. Year 5 really did us proud, being role models for the younger children.



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This term, Year 6 have produced a wide range of high-quality writing. They completed detailed **non-chronological reports on World War One**, focusing on formal language, paraphrasing and linking ideas clearly. They also drafted emotive **"No Man's Land" settings**, using literary devices to create atmosphere.

Inspired by the Literacy Shed film *Francis* and the 2014 Sainsbury's Christmas Truce advert, pupils have begun writing suspenseful diary entries, showing excellent imagination and control of tone.

Performance poetry has been another standout. Children practised projecting their voices, using expression and performing confidently with some brave volunteers presenting to the whole class.

A special highlight was a **webinar with author Tom Palmer**, where pupils learned about the true story behind *War Dog* and enjoyed a live illustration session with Caroline Rabei.

Maths: Building Fluency and Confidence

In maths, pupils have worked hard on:

- Fractions, including mixed numbers, improper fractions and adding/subtracting with different denominators
- Decimal place value, rounding and operations
- Fraction-decimal-percentage equivalents
- Dividing decimals by whole numbers
- Long division

Their arithmetic assessments showed fantastic progress since the start of the year which is a testament to their determination and resilience.

Science: Investigating the World Around Us

Science has been hands-on and full of curiosity. Year 6 have:

- Explored **soluble and insoluble substances**
- Investigated **reversible and irreversible changes**
- Learned about the **circulatory system** and how the heart, blood and vessels work together
- Taken part in a **science visit from Manor High School**, learning about everyday dangers and how to stay safe

These practical sessions have strengthened their scientific thinking and teamwork.

Humanities, RE and PSHE

In Geography, pupils began a new unit on **trade**, exploring imports, exports and global supply chains. In RE, they discussed different worldviews — **theism, atheism and agnosticism** and reflected on how faith and science can complement each other. One quote that resonated strongly was: *"Faith tells us why; science tells us how."*

PSHE has focused on **Anti-Bullying Week**, human rights, kindness agreements and the roles people play in difficult situations. Pupils showed empathy and maturity in their discussions.

Creative Curriculum

Art has been vibrant and varied. Children created:

- Christmas decorations sewn onto luggage tags
- Space-themed scratch-art during a workshop with 2Queens Studio
- Poetry performances using Keynote

In Music, pupils enjoyed developing their **beatboxing and rhythm** skills.

PE and Outdoor Learning

Year 6 wrapped up their hockey unit with mini-tournaments, refereeing matches and demonstrating excellent sportsmanship. They also enjoyed OAA activities and indoor problem-solving sessions when the weather turned.

Food Routes: Practical Skills for Life

Cooking has been a real highlight. This term, pupils made chilli bean potatoes as well as an apple and blackberry crumble. They learned about nutrition, safe chopping, food hygiene, sugar awareness and how ingredients are processed. Their independence in the kitchen has grown enormously.

Visits, Events and Celebrations

Year 6 have taken part in a wide range of special events, including:

- **Warning Zone**, learning about e-safety, rail safety and staying safe in the community
- **Children in Need** and **Hello Yellow Day**
- A whole-school **Christmas performance**
- Christmas Jumper Day and a festive lunch

We were also thrilled to celebrate excellent attendance, positive behaviour and high engagement on Boom Reader across the year group.

