

Curriculum newsletter Autumn term 2025

As we come to the end of a busy and exciting autumn term, we would like to take the opportunity to celebrate the fantastic learning that has taken place across the schools at Ashleyhill Trust. The children have shown great enthusiasm, curiosity and resilience as they have explored their curriculum topics, and we are incredibly proud of all that they have achieved.

Reading and Writing

This term, children across the school have been immersed in high-quality texts linked to their topics. Through our Steps to Read, Take One Book and Read to Write approaches, pupils have developed both their comprehension skills and their love of reading.

Younger children explored familiar stories and traditional tales, building confidence in sentence writing, punctuation and spelling.

In lower key stage 2, pupils produced a range of engaging writing, including Viking fables, myths and information reports about animal. This writing helped the children to develop their use of paragraphs, conjunctions and direct speech.

Older pupils tackled more complex texts, such as historical fiction and longer novels, producing newspaper reports and narrative writing with increasingly sophisticated vocabulary and punctuation.

Across all year groups, children have shown growing independence in planning, drafting and editing their work, and many have taken great pride in sharing their writing.

Mathematics

In mathematics, children have made strong progress in both fluency and reasoning.

Pupils developed secure understanding of place value, addition and subtraction, with increasing confidence using formal written methods.

Multiplication and division skills were strengthened through regular practice of times tables and the application of strategies to solve problems.

Older children explored fractions, negative numbers and multi-step calculations, applying their knowledge to increasingly challenging problems.

Teachers have been particularly impressed with how pupils explain their thinking and persevere when faced with some tricky mathematical tasks!



History and Geography

Our autumn topics brought history and geography to life.

Children learned about significant historical periods such as the Great Fire of London, the Vikings, and the Tudor period, asking thoughtful questions and using evidence to deepen their understanding.

They explored how people lived in the past, the impact of key events and individuals, and how history has shaped the world we live in today.

Geography learning helped pupils develop strong map skills, understand human and physical features, and make comparisons between places and time periods.

Geography

Geography learning this term helped children build their understanding of place and the relationship between people and the environment.

Younger pupils learned about London and the United Kingdom, developing early map skills and using simple directional language to describe places.

In Year 3 and 4, geography was closely linked to their Viking topic. Children learned about Scandinavia, exploring human and physical features, climate and how the Vikings navigated and travelled. They developed map-reading skills and investigated where the Vikings settled in the UK, including evidence found in local place names.

In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils explored changing world maps and the impact of exploration during the Tudor period. They compared historical maps with modern ones and discussed why maps change over time, particularly due to political and social change. This supported their understanding of global connections and the evolving nature of geography.

Science

Science learning this term focused on developing children's curiosity, scientific enquiry skills and understanding of the world around them through practical, hands-on experiences.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1, children explored everyday materials, learning to identify and describe their properties and investigate which materials are best suited for different purposes. They asked simple questions, made observations and carried out practical tests, helping them to understand how science is used in everyday life.

In Lower Key Stage 2, pupils studied habitats and living things, learning about the requirements for life and how animals are grouped. They created branching keys to identify living things and explored how environments support different species. Pupils also learned about electricity, building simple circuits, using correct scientific vocabulary and investigating conductors and insulators.

In Upper Key Stage 2, children completed the unit Animals Including Humans, learning about growth and development, the human circulatory system and the effects of exercise on the body. They also explored how lifestyle choices, including diet, exercise and substance use, can impact health and wellbeing.

Across all year groups, children developed skills in questioning, predicting, observing, recording and explaining, and showed growing confidence in using scientific language to share their findings.



Music

Music has played an important role in bringing learning to life this term.

Children listened to and performed music linked to their topics, exploring how music can reflect a historical period or tell a story.

Singing was a key focus, with pupils developing confidence, clear diction and an awareness of rhythm and melody.

Instrumental work supported listening skills, teamwork and musical appreciation.

Music lessons provided a joyful and expressive outlet, with many children showing increased confidence in performing.

Religious Education

RE lessons encouraged thoughtful discussion, reflection and respect for different beliefs.

Children explored key religious stories, teachings and big questions, considering how faith influences people's lives and choices.

They made links between religious teachings and values such as kindness, responsibility, stewardship and compassion.

Opportunities to express personal viewpoints helped pupils develop empathy and confidence in sharing ideas.

The RE and Art themed week further enriched this learning, allowing children to explore belief, creativity and care for the world in meaningful ways.



Computing

Computing lessons focused on both **technical knowledge and digital responsibility**.

Children learned how computer networks operate and how digital services support everyday life.

They developed effective online research skills, learning how to search for information safely and efficiently.

Online safety was a key focus, with pupils learning about digital footprints, privacy and how to seek help if they encounter concerns online.

These lessons have helped children become more confident, responsible and informed users of technology.

PSHE

PSHE learning supported children's **emotional wellbeing and personal safety**.

Pupils learned about keeping safe, understanding personal boundaries and recognising trusted adults.

Lessons promoted positive relationships, self-awareness and resilience.

Children were encouraged to reflect on their own feelings and the importance of seeking help when needed.

These sessions play an essential role in helping children feel safe, confident and supported.



Physical Education

In PE, children developed their physical skills across a range of sports, including tag rugby, football, gymnastics and netball. They worked collaboratively, built confidence and began to apply tactics and rules within games, demonstrating excellent teamwork and sportsmanship.

Design and technology

Design and Technology lessons provided exciting opportunities for problem-solving, teamwork and innovation.

Pupils investigated real-world designs, learning how materials, structures and mechanisms work.

They designed, made and evaluated their own products, considering what worked well and how their designs could be improved.

Projects ranged from moving story mechanisms and Viking longships to mechanical solutions inspired by historical contexts.

Through these activities, children developed resilience, creativity and a strong sense of purpose in their learning.



Art

Creativity flourished this term!

Art lessons this term have focused on developing both technical skills and creative expression.

Children explored the work of significant artists, learning how art can reflect culture, history and personal identity.

They developed painting skills such as colour mixing, using light and dark tones, pattern and proportion, and working with increasing control and precision.

Self-portrait projects encouraged pupils to reflect on themselves while applying artistic techniques inspired by well-known artists.

Children showed great pride in their artwork and demonstrated a growing ability to evaluate and talk about their creative choices.



Trips and Enrichment

Educational visits have played a vital role in enriching learning this term, giving children the opportunity to experience their curriculum in meaningful, memorable ways.

Our UKS2 pupils enjoyed an exciting residential visit to Hooke Court, where they developed independence, resilience and teamwork while taking part in a range of collaborative activities. The experience supported personal development alongside learning, with children rising to new challenges and strengthening friendships.

UKS2 pupils also visited Hampton Court Palace as part of their Tudor history topic. They explored the palace and took part in a trade workshop, where they investigated the impact of Tudor exploration, trade and wealth. This hands-on experience helped pupils deepen their understanding of the Tudor period and consider who benefited — and who paid the human cost — of Tudor trade and expansion. Seeing the historic setting first-hand brought their classroom learning vividly to life.

Year 3 & 4 – Farm Visit

Year 3 and 4 visited a local farm to support their science learning about habitats and living things. Children observed animals in real-life settings, learned about their needs and environments, and made links between habitats, food chains and adaptation. The visit sparked curiosity and led to thoughtful questions and discussions back in the classroom.

Year 1 & 2 – Great Fire of London Workshop

Year 1 and 2 took part in an engaging Great Fire of London workshop, delivered in school by the *History Off the Page* team. Through drama, storytelling and artefacts, children learned about the events, causes and consequences of the fire. The immersive experience helped them understand historical events in an age-appropriate and memorable way, bringing their history topic to life.

Foundation – First School Trip

For our youngest pupils, a local walk around the school and village marked their very first school trip. This experience supported their understanding of the local environment while building confidence, independence and curiosity. Children enjoyed exploring familiar surroundings in a new way and learning how to stay safe when out in the community.



Wintershall Travelling Nativity and Christmas week

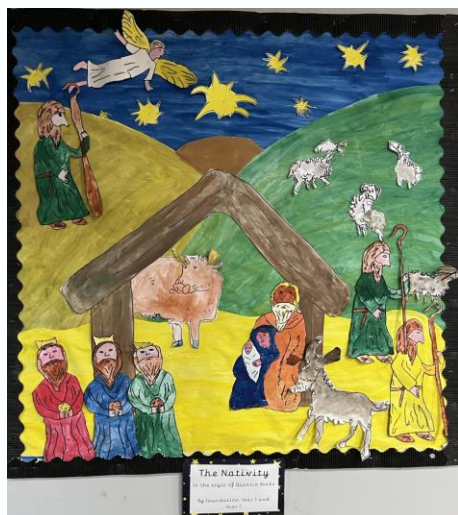
One of the most special highlights of the autumn term was our visit from the Wintershall Travelling Nativity, hosted at Bisham CE Academy. This immersive experience provided a powerful and memorable way for the children to deepen their understanding of the Christmas story.

Children from across the three schools thoroughly enjoyed meeting the characters from the Nativity, including Mary, the Donkey, the shepherds and the Wise Men. Through storytelling, drama and interaction, pupils learned about each character's role in the Nativity and explored the journey, challenges and hope at the heart of the Christmas story.

We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to take part in the Wintershall Travelling Nativity. It was a truly memorable experience that enriched our RE learning and helped bring the Christmas story to life in a meaningful and lasting way.

During Christmas Week, children across the schools took part in a range of thoughtful and creative activities that encouraged reflection on the meaning of the Nativity story. Through lessons carefully planned by teachers, pupils explored the story from the perspectives of the different characters, helping them to understand their roles, feelings and significance within the Nativity. These activities supported deeper discussion around themes of hope, kindness and joy.

Alongside this, children learned about the illustrator Quentin Blake, studying his distinctive artistic style. They applied this learning to create stunning Nativity scene displays, with characters drawn using Blake's expressive lines and unique approach. The finished displays are a wonderful celebration of creativity and reflection, showcasing both artistic skill and a deepened understanding of the Christmas story.



The autumn term has been full of rich learning experiences, and the children should be very proud of their achievements. Thank you for your continued support at home—it plays a vital role in helping children thrive at school.

We wish you all a restful and happy break and look forward to welcoming everyone back for another exciting term of learning.