Curriculum News - Autumn 2026

The Pines School

Be Your BEST

Believe - Excellence - Safe - Team

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*The new school year has begun very positively, with children returning to school ready and eager to learn. We have settled back into term-time routines quickly and it has been wonderful to see and hear the energy and enthusiasm in our busy classrooms. Across the school, all classes have been focusing on establishing expectations and revisiting our school values of **Believe, Excellence, Safe** and **Team**, alongside our three school rules: **Be Calm, Be Ready and Be Respectful**.*

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myHappymind

We have introduced a programme to all year groups at school called myHappymind. myHappymind is based around helping children to understand how their brain works and to support them in developing positive skills and habits to be their very best selves! myHappymind is taught across five modules and each introduces a new set of content and habits to help children build resilience, self-esteem and confidence: Meet your brain, Celebrate, Appreciate, Relate and Engage.

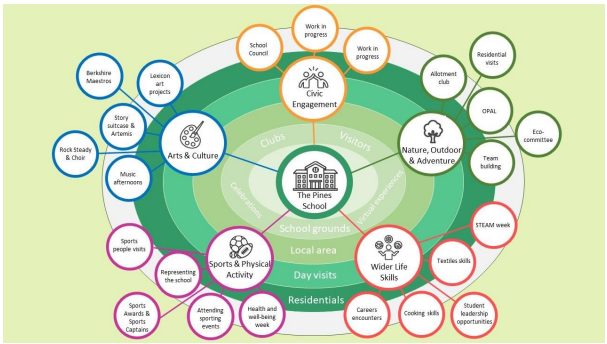
After the children have completed the Meet your brain module, they will find out about myHappymind places - a targeted course to help children with their self regulation. Children will link how they feel to a different place: Happy Place, Middle Place and Busy Place. They will explore how they feel when they are in each place and practise strategies to help them return to their Happy Place.

Teachers will deliver these 30 minute sessions on Monday mornings and children will have an opportunity to reflect on the learning in their very own journals.

Keep an eye out for information on how to access the myHappymind parent app.

Enrichment at The Pines

We are excited to share our new Friday afternoon enrichment programme for children in Years 2 to 6. Throughout the year, pupils will take part in a series of six-week blocks, giving them the opportunity to experience a range of exciting activities including bushcraft, drama and musical theatre, music, sewing, cooking and team-building PE. We have chosen this approach to help children discover new interests, develop talents that may not always be showcased through the normal curriculum, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the wider school community. Our EYFS and Year 1 children will continue to benefit from a rich range of opportunities through their continuous provision, including outdoor play, junk modelling, creative play, engineering with small and large loose parts, construction activities and much more. We are excited to see the children embrace these experiences and develop new skills and confidence along the way.



Learning at Home

Learning takes place in many different environments and is certainly not limited to the classroom. We are keen to involve parents and carers even more in their child's learning journey and will be exploring opportunities for families to come into school and take part in learning experiences alongside their children.

At home, we ask that all children read daily, practise their maths skills regularly through NumBots (KS1) or Times Tables Rock Stars (KS2), and learn their year group's Common Exception Words to support the development of accurate spelling.

While online learning can be valuable and electronic devices are often used for relaxation and entertainment, research suggests that excessive screen time can have a negative impact on children's wellbeing. We therefore encourage children to enjoy a healthy balance of activities and to spend time away from screens each day. If you would like any advice or support in this area, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher.

Class Webpages

Our school webpage is full of useful information including calendar dates, who's who, policies and support for parents, carers and families. It also includes a wealth of information about our children's learning. There is general curriculum information with an overview of the whole school but every phase and class have their own webpage that teachers keep up to date with current information.

If you would like to know the subject areas your child is currently learning about, what skills they are working on in maths, which book is their class novel or what style of writing they are currently focusing on, it is all on the class webpage. There are also suggestions of websites or other resources that can be used to extend your child's learning at home.

Please do look at our website - it really is full of useful information!

https://www.thepinesschool.org.uk/

Please follow us on Instagram - thepinesschool26 - to find out the latest news and to see pictures of our learning. It's a great way of seeing what's going on in school.

Year Group Learning

EYFS

In Nursery, we will start off by settling into the class routines and by getting to know each other. Our topic for the term will be 'Nursery Rhymes', with one rhyme that we focus on each

week. We will enjoy singing the songs, reading stories, and creating art work linked to the songs.

In Reception, we will learn how to use our classroom carefully and purposefully. There will be a big focus on settling into routines, following class rules, communicating with our peers and beginning to understand the type of play which helps us learn lots. We will also base some of our learning around the story 'The Little Red Hen'. Linked to this we will explore dough making, different farmyard animals and lots of fine motor activities using flour, straw and messy play.

KEY STAGE 1

In year 1, we will begin the year by exploring our continuous provision — the resources and activities available in our classroom that encourage children to learn through play, curiosity and exploration. We will also continue to develop positive learning behaviours, helping the children to become confident, independent and enthusiastic learners. Our topic will focus on the theme of belonging. We will talk about what it means to belong to our school, our families and our local community. We will then travel back in time to discover what life was like for our grandparents when they were children. In particular, we will explore the toys they played with and compare them with the toys children enjoy today, identifying similarities and differences.In maths, we will revisit and strengthen our understanding of place value, developing confidence with numbers to 50 and beyond. We will explore how numbers are made up of tens and ones and use practical resources and representations to support our understanding. In English, we will continue to apply the sounds and spelling patterns we learn through phonics to our writing. We will focus on writing simple sentences accurately, remembering to use capital letters, finger spaces and full stops. We will encourage children to develop confidence in expressing their ideas clearly and independently.We are looking forward to a happy, exciting and productive start to Year 1!

This term our learning in Year 2 will focus around the topic 'Home Sweet Home'. In English, we will learn how to write narratives to entertain our readers by including some year 2 writing tools such as expanded noun phrases and conjunctions. In maths, we will deepen our understanding of place value. We will also learn addition and subtraction strategies for working with larger numbers. In the wider curriculum, we will explore the history and geography of Bracknell and complete some geographical fieldwork. We will explore what plants need to grow and survive in our science work and in DT we will be learning about a balanced diet. In PE, we will be working on our dodging skills.

LOWER KEY STAGE 2

This term in our curriculum work, Year 3 will be learning about the period in history from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. We will learn about their homes, how they got food and the tools they used, and how these evolved through this period in history. In science, we will be learning about forces & magnets, before moving onto rocks and fossils. Our class novel this half term is An Alien in the Jam Factory. *In writing, we will be developing our descriptive writing skills, using setting and character descriptions in a story based on* Mini Rabbit Not Lost. *We will be exploring poetry by looking at* The Magic Box *as well as focusing on the skills needed to write non-chronological reports. We will also be focusing on key skills, including handwriting and how to form and join letters correctly, as well as working on our phonics and spelling skills. In maths, we start by looking at place value of numbers up to 1000, before moving on to addition and subtraction.*

To begin with in year 4, we will be learning about the Romans and their invasion of Britain. We will investigate their reasons for invading Britain, the spread of the empire, different leaders of the time and the variety of Roman artefacts. Our art and DT lessons will build on our Romans knowledge with the production of Roman mosaics and the investigation of different foods. In science, we will build on our learning about states of matter before investigating sound, including how it is produced and how it travels. In writing lessons, we will start by creating graphic novel scenes before writing a short narrative scene. We will move onto focusing on the skills required to write a persuasive speech and an explanation. We will explore poetry by looking at the poem A Small Dragon. *To work alongside our writing units, we will be diving into our class novels 'The Wild Robot' and 'The Secret Wild'. For maths, we are strengthening our place value knowledge and further developing our four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). This number knowledge will help us in our French unit of numbers, calendars and birthdays. Our PE lessons will cover invasion games like tag rugby and netball, before we move onto our gymnastics unit. We will also be getting started on our preparation for the Multiplication Tables Check, which the children will be taking in the summer term.*

UPPER KEY STAGE 2

This term, Year 5 will be exploring the Anglo-Saxons and trying to answer the question 'What changes did the Anglo-Saxons bring to Britain?' We will be looking at who the Anglo-Saxons were and why they chose to settle in Britain. We will also study artefacts from the period and use these to help us infer what daily life was like. Our class novel this term is The 1000 year old boy, *which is linked to out history topic. Writing lessons will be focused on the skills required to write non-chronological reports, biographies, effective descriptions in narrative writing as well as writing our own circular stories. We will explore cinquain poems. In maths, we will be looking at place value initially, before moving on to look at the four calculations. In our art lessons, the children will be studying illuminated lettering, before creating their own typography styles. In science, we will be exploring different materials and their*

properties. We will test a range of materials for their durability, absorbency and magnetic properties. In our PE lessons, we will be developing skills related to rugby and netball.

This term Year 6 will be finding out about trade - how we're connected to the world, how it has changed over time, and the journey of complex manufactured goods and the part we can play in ensuring fair trade for everyone in this journey. We will then be thinking about how the Vikings traded and the impact trade had in their struggle with the Anglo-Saxons for the Kingdom of England. In science, we will be learning about light. Writing lessons will be focused on the skills required to write mystery and suspense stories, non-chronological reports and persuasive speeches. This term, our class novel is Holes*. In maths, as always at the start of the year, we will be focusing on place value, laying good foundations for the rest of the year, before moving onto the four operations.*

The Orchard

We have been so pleased to welcome the children into the Orchard for the Autumn term! Children have returned really well and new children are settling in well too. It has been fantastic to see how grown up and mature our children have been in managing the changes to our staff team and their environments!

This week, we will start our Literacy learning and each class will be having their own book to inspire their English. We will study these books in lots of detail will be thinking about friendships and working on social skills, as well as using stories as prompts for being our BEST! We have enjoyed our reading/ story times this week and would like to encourage all children to read as much as possible.

We will be building on our current skills to develop our letter and number formation, our understanding of number and be learning about place value. We will be using colourful semantics to develop our sentence writing skills and working on our descriptive writing. As with everything in the Orchard, we will be working at our individual pace and building on what we each need.

We will be exploring our new mainstream classes and taking opportunities to join in with wider curriculum work too.