

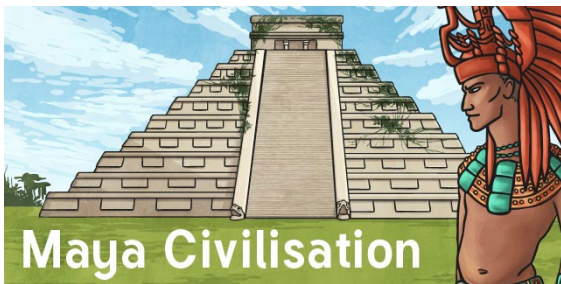
Years 5 & 6 Shepherd's Class Spring 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Firstly, we would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and I hope that you had a good Christmas and restful break over the holiday. Coming up over the spring term, we have lots of exciting events going on and some fantastic topics to explore.

Text study- Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Wonder is about August "Auggie" Pullman, a 10-year-old boy with a severe facial difference who, after being home-schooled, starts mainstream middle school (fifth grade) for the first time, navigating challenges like bullying, friendship, and acceptance while learning to see past his appearance and others learning to see past his face. Told from multiple perspectives, including Auggie's, his sister Via's, and classmates', it's a story about kindness, courage, and empathy. The children will focus on using a dictionary to search up vocabulary found within the text and record the definitions; they will add new words to their 'Treasure Book' of new vocabulary. They will continue to use retrieval, prediction and inference skills and begin to make links to previous texts they have read. Once we have finished the book the children will have the opportunity to compare the book with the movie* Please email Mrs Morgan if you would rather your child did not watch the movie. Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngiK1gQKgK8>



History- Maya Civilisation

The children will learn who the ancient Maya people were and where and when they lived. They will use maps and atlases to locate Maya cities and identify countries in Mesoamerica. In addition to this they will learn about the religious beliefs and rituals of the ancient Maya people and find out more about some of the many gods they worshipped. The children will also learn about the Maya number system and have the opportunity to read and write Maya numbers and solve number problems. They will learn about the Maya writing system too and practise writing words using logograms and syllabograms in the hieroglyphic style of the ancient Maya people. The children will learn about the work of the explorers John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood and have the opportunity to analyse historical pictures of the cities they discovered. They will also learn about the types of food eaten by the ancient Maya people and they will find out about the significance of corn and chocolate, arguing which was most important in a class debate.



Geography- Our Changing World

In this unit, children will discover some of the many ways in which the world around them is changing. From coastal erosion to political changes, there are many factors at work. Children will learn about the structure of the United Kingdom and how its shape and geography have changed over thousands of years. Using an online database of photographs, children can explore how landscapes change. In the final lesson of this unit, children have the chance to predict the future and look at which might change again in their lifetimes.

Science -In the autumn term, the children will be studying the topics of '**Properties of Materials**' and '**Light**'. In our first topic the children will test different materials for a range of different properties (magnetism, hardness, transparency and electrical conductivity), plan and carry out an investigation into the insulating properties of different materials and look at the everyday uses of materials, such as wood, plastic and metal. In our second topic the children will name and identify simple parts of the human eye and discuss their functions in relation to being able to see objects. Children also explore the idea that some objects emit light while others reflect light. They will also undertake a fair test to explore whether the distance from a light source affects the size of the shadow. The children will plan their experiment and identify the independent, dependent and controlled variables. At this stage in Year 6, children should plan their experiment more independently.



P.E. - Swimming lessons will take place on a Tuesday afternoon at Daventry Leisure Centre during the first half of the spring term. The children will also be learning about the skills and tactics involved in the sports of hockey and tennis.

Computing - The children will learn through the units; 'Blogging', 'Text Adventures' and 'Networks'. They will recap on the safe use of the internet and how to create a Blog. They will explore the power of text in the context of online information and learn how networks are used to create links and retrieve information.



RE - In our first topic 'Galilee to Jerusalem', the children will study the Gospel of John and learn about the various miracles that Jesus performed - such as walking on water and the raising of Lazarus - and use theological vocabulary to explain the key teachings that John wanted to convey about him and what these texts reveal about his human and divine nature. As well as this, they will discover the meanings behind the 'I am' statements and the Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church.

During our second topic 'Desert to Garden', the children will learn about Jesus' anointing at Bethany, his teachings to his apostles during the 'Washing of Feet' and the Last Supper and his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. They will also gather and consider the historical and theological evidence from John's gospel about the nature of Jesus' trial and make links between the events of Jesus' crucifixion and the Christian reflection 'Stations of the cross'.



Art- Plants and Flowers

This Plants and Flowers unit will teach the children about how to use pencil, colour, Hapa Zome printing, sculpture and paper modelling to create quality art work that shows progression in their skills. The children will also have the opportunity to explore the work of India Flint, Alexander Calder, David Oliveira and Henri Rousseau.

Music - Music this term starts with the topic 'A New Year Carol'. During this unit, the children will learn to play and sing the song 'A New Year's Carol' by composer Benjamin Britten. They will also listen to and study other songs by the same composer before creating their own composition to play alongside it. In our second unit, 'You've Got a Friend', the children will learn to sing and play along to the song 'You've got a Friend' by Carole King. They will also study other songs by Carole King, such as 'The Loco-Motion' and 'Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow', before creating and composing their own composition to accompany 'You've Got a Friend'.

Homework

The homework tasks that the children are expected to complete are as follows:

- Read their school reading book (daily)
- Practise spellings (weekly)
- Times table practise (weekly)
- One Maths task (weekly)- Mathematics



Homework will be set on a Tuesday and needs to be completed by the following Monday morning. The completed homework will be marked on this day, with a reward of a house point for completing it. The children will be expected to stick in their own spellings into their homework book/ folder. On a Tuesday morning, the children will be tested on their spellings and the current level of the Multiples Marathon that they are on.



P.E.

Swimming sessions will take place on a Tuesday afternoon during the first part of the spring term.

PE lessons will take place on a Monday afternoon. Please ensure that your child has the following kit suitable for both indoor and outdoor sessions:

- A red t-shirt
- Black shorts
- Trainers
- A pair of tracksuit/jogging bottoms
- A hoodie or sweatshirt

We will aim to be outside as much as possible for our P.E. session, so it is important that the children have the items listed above to keep them warm as the weather gets colder. **Please note: in the interests of safety, children with earrings will be expected to remove them.**

If you have any queries or questions, then please feel free to arrange a meeting by contacting the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr J. Causebrook and Mrs D. Morgan

Years 5/6 Class Teachers

Mathematics & P.E. Coordinator / SENCO, Senior Teacher and Mental Health Lead

Useful websites:

Mathematics:

<https://whiteroseeducation.com/parent-pupil-resources/maths/free-downloads>

<https://whiteroseeducation.com/1-minute-maths>

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-2/subjects/maths>

English:

EnglishGrammar: <https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-2/subjects/english-grammar>

History:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z2pmvj6>

Guided Reading- Wonder:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngiK1gQKqK8>