

Leavening Community Primary School

Oak Trees Curriculum Newsletter

Autumn Term 1 2026



Hello all,

Welcome back! I hope you have all had a lovely, restful summer and are ready to kick off the new school year. We are so excited to welcome our new year 3s into Oak Trees, and of course to welcome back our returning year 4, 5 and 6 pupils. I am looking forward to some of the brilliant topics we will be covering this year and I know the children are going to have a blast with them.

As always, key dates will be listed in our fortnightly school newsletter alongside features of what we get up to in Oak Tree Class. Our first whole school topic of the year is **Evolution – In the beginning**, which we will be launching with an archiologist themed afternoon on our first day back.

Key dates for our class each week:

Forest school is on a **Monday** – children are **required to wear** long sleeves and long trousers, bring gloves and appropriate foot wear. Coats/waterproofs are also great to bring as Autumn term brings rain, mud and adventure! Leggings/tracksuits/sportswear is fine as long as it is full coverage of arms and legs. It is super important for children to abide by this to allow us to go down into the forest safely and engage in all activities.

PE is now on a **Thursday** - Please ensure your child wears their PE kit to school on Thursdays. PE kit should consist of: a plain white T-shirt with or without school logo and navy blue, black or grey PE joggers or shorts, with trainers. They may also bring a plain jumper or jacket for colder weather.

Spelling checks are on **Wednesdays** – We use EdShed to teach our spelling curriculum and pupils all will have access to a log in to practise spellings at home. Little and often is the best way to ensure your child has enough practise of the spellings we learn each week. EdShed offers a fun and engaging way to get the practise in!

Homework: homework is set at the start of term and is encouraged to be **completed through out the term**, little and often when you have some spare time. We set fun, educational tasks to apply their learning from school, or to expand their learning further and to share their knowledge with their families at home. The tasks are low pressure, engaging and to encourage discussion and critical thinking. **Homework is due** the Monday of the last week of term (**19th of October**) so that we can have our homework celebration – where pupils get the chance to share with each other what they have done at home.

I look forward to seeing you all soon! As always, any questions email admin or come find me!

From Miss T and Team Oak Trees

English:

At the start of term, we will be introducing and recapping our key English skills and exploring what makes a writer. We will be practising our grammar, sentence structures and key writing tools that we will be using through out the year.

We will also be focusing on writing narratives – through our work on one class text “Stone age boy” linking to our history topic. We will be focusing on first person story telling and using expressive language, detailed descriptions and time adverbials.

Key texts that we will be focusing on throughout the term are: Non-fiction: Charles Darwin’s *On The Origin Of Species* by Sabena Radeva, Non-fiction: *The Street Beneath My Feet* by Charlotte Guillian and Yuval Zommer, Fiction: *The Stolen spear* by Saviour Pirotta.

Our poetry focus is narrative poems using a variety of different poet’s works such as Michael Rosens “I was born in the Stone Age”, *1066 and Before That: History Poems* by Brian Moses and Roger Stevens and other narrative poetry.

Maths:

We will be kicking off the new term with a focus on number, place value and the four written methods (+ - / and x). We will also be looking at where to find maths in the world around us. Year 3 and 4 will also begin to start their multiplication fact learning journey. Knowing your timestables is a key skill in KS2 and fast recall of multiplication facts helps support your child to apply this skill to all their maths learning!

Some helpful sites to support timestable learning at home:

timestables.co.uk

URBrainy – MTC (multiplication tables check)

Science:

Year 3/4: Rocks and Fossils

In Science, Year 3/4 will be exploring the fascinating world of rocks and fossils. The children will investigate the different types of rocks and learn how they are formed, comparing their properties and looking at how rocks can change over time. We will also discover how fossils are created and what they can tell us about life on Earth millions of years ago. Through practical investigations and observations, the children will develop their scientific enquiry skills and become ‘rock detectives’!

Year 5/6: Evolution

Year 5/6 will be learning about evolution and how living things have changed over time. The children will explore the work of Charles Darwin and discover how fossils and other evidence can help us understand how species have developed and adapted. We will investigate natural selection, variation and inheritance, considering why some characteristics can help living things survive in changing environments. This unit will encourage the children to think scientifically about how life on Earth has changed over millions of years.

History:

In History, Oak Trees will be travelling back in time to explore life during the Stone Age. We will discover how people lived, hunted and gathered food, and how they adapted to their environment. The children will investigate the changes that took place throughout the Stone Age, including the transition from hunter-gatherer communities to more settled farming societies. We will also explore archaeological evidence, including artefacts, monuments and settlements such as Skara Brae, to help us piece together what life may have been like for prehistoric people. We will continue to travel through the different periods of the Stone Age and then compare how life was different through the Iron Age.

Computing:

Year 3/4: Connecting Computers

In Computing, Year 3/4 will be developing their understanding of how computers and digital devices work together. We will begin by comparing digital and non-digital devices and exploring the important role of inputs, processes and outputs. The children will then investigate computer networks and discover how devices such as routers and switches help information travel between computers. This unit will help pupils understand the networks and systems that allow our digital devices to communicate with one another.

Year 5/6: Systems and Searching

In Computing, Year 5/6 will be developing their understanding of computer systems and how information is transferred between different devices. The children will explore both small-scale and large-scale systems, identifying the inputs, processes and outputs involved in a variety of real-world examples. We will also investigate how information is found on the World Wide Web, exploring how search engines work, how they select and rank results, and what can influence the results we see. The children will compare different search engines and develop their understanding of how to search for information effectively and thoughtfully.

RE:

Year 3/4: What do different people believe about God?

In RE, Year 3/4 will be exploring the different ways people understand and think about God. We will consider beliefs from a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, including Christian, Hindu, Muslim and humanist perspectives, and explore the different ways people might describe or represent God. The children will have opportunities to discuss their ideas, consider different perspectives and explore how beliefs about God can influence the way people live their lives. We will encourage thoughtful discussion and respectful curiosity about a wide range of beliefs.

Year 5/6: Why do some people believe God exists?

In RE, Year 5/6 will be exploring the question of why some people believe that God exists. We will investigate a range of arguments and reasons that religious believers might give for their beliefs, alongside perspectives from people who do not believe in God. The children will consider ideas such as evidence, personal experience, the natural world and different philosophical arguments, learning that people can reach different conclusions about these important questions. Throughout the unit, pupils will develop their ability to discuss, question and evaluate different viewpoints respectfully.

PSHE:

This half terms topic is called 'Being in my World' and all children will learn about forming a class charter and having an input into the school behaviour policy. We will elect our new young leadership team members and will learn all about being active and responsible citizens.

Years 3 and 4

Children will explore the concepts of:
Being part of a class team
Being a school citizen
Rights, responsibilities and democracy (school council)
Rewards and consequences
Group decision-making
Having a voice
What motivates behaviour?

Years 5 and 6

Children will explore the concepts of:
Identifying goals for the year
Global citizenship
Children's universal rights
Feeling welcome and valued
Choices, consequences and rewards
Group dynamics
Democracy, having a voice.
Anti-social behaviour
Role-modelling

Picture news

Each week we will learn about our British Values through current affairs in our world. We will explore: Tolerance of other faiths and beliefs, Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and will understand characteristics of being a good and fair citizen.

PE:

On a Thursday afternoon, we will have a coach from Malton Sports partnership delivering PE.

This half term we will be exploring Ball skills each Thursday afternoon. Children will

- Vary skills, actions and ideas and link these in ways that suit the activity of the game.
- Show confidence in using ball skills in various ways and link these together. e.g. dribbling, bouncing,
- kicking.
- Use skills with coordination, control and fluency.
- Create their own games using knowledge and skills.
- Apply basic skills for attacking and defending.

They will take part in a variety of competitive games with a strong understanding of tactics and composition.

Art:

In Art, Oak Trees will be exploring gestural drawing using charcoal. We will experiment with different marks, movements and techniques to capture the shape, movement and energy of a subject rather than simply drawing what we see. The children will explore how changing pressure, direction and movement can create different effects, developing their confidence in using charcoal as an expressive medium. We will focus on experimenting, responding to what we see and using drawing to communicate movement and emotion.

Music:

As musicians we will be learning about the evolution of notation understanding that Guido d'Arezzo devised the system of staff notation. Treble clef pitch mnemonics will help us to read pitch to learn part of Do-Re-Mi on glockenspiels. We will read traditional rhythm notation learning note values - names and lengths. Performance and composition work will involve performing Rapping Rhythms and creating a similar piece of music based on word rhythms linked to animals. We will explore notating the rhythms and add pitch to at least one part. We will also listen to music to develop our ability to feel the pulse, recognise rhythms and instruments considering a range of styles. We will prepare the songs for the Christmas Production.

French:

As French linguists we will be learning the alphabet in French. We will be learning and revising family members vocabulary. We will also work on the French vocabulary for parts of the body and facial features. We will learn a little bit about traditions in France at Christmas. We will be using our listening, speaking, reading and writing skills alongside singing songs and playing games in French.

Homework

My expectation is for you to attempt at least one of each row of homework across the term. On **Monday 19th October** we will complete our homework sharing session where we will celebrate all our achievements together. This date will not be changed if people forget! (Across 2 pages)

Dojo homework acknowledgement:

1 Piece = 2 Dojos	4 Pieces = 8 Dojos	7 Pieces = 16 Dojos
2 Pieces = 4 Dojos	5 pieces = 10 Dojos	8 Pieces = 18 Dojos
3 Pieces = 6 Dojos	6 Piece = 13 Dojos	9 Pieces = 20 Dojos

Stone age survival guide: Create a guide for a Stone Age person explaining how to find food, build shelter, make tools and stay safe.	Build a Stone Age settlement: Use LEGO, cardboard, clay, natural materials or junk modelling to create a Stone Age settlement. Include labels explaining what each part is used for.	Time traveller diary: Imagine you have travelled back to the Stone Age. Create a diary entry describing your day.
Make a fossil: Create a model fossil using salt dough, clay or another suitable material. You could press a shell, leaf or small object into the material and explain how this represents fossil formation. Or Fossil detective: Find out about a famous fossil and create a fact file, museum display or information card about it.	Year 3/4 - Input, process, output hunt: Find examples around your home of devices that use an input, process and output. Create a poster showing your examples. Year 5/6 - Search engine challenge: Choose a question and investigate how the results differ between two search engines. Record what you notice and discuss why the results might be different. Remember to ask for adult support to search online safely!	Design an adapted animal: Invent an animal that has adapted to survive in a particular environment. Draw it, label its adaptations and explain how each one helps it survive. Or Evolution comic: Create a comic strip showing how a species might change over many generations because of its environment.
Mystery object: Choose an ordinary object and turn it into the most important object in an exciting story. Who owns it? Why is it important? What happens when it goes missing?	Continue the poem: Start with a simple opening such as <i>"I opened the door and couldn't believe what I saw..."</i> and turn it into a poem that tells a story.	PSHE: Year 3/4 - Good citizen challenge: Complete a helpful action at home or in your community and create a certificate, drawing or short reflection explaining what you did and how it helped someone else. Year 5/6 - Make a difference: Identify an issue in your school, local community or wider world that you care about. Design a realistic action plan showing how young people could help.

Look and learn beyond the classroom | Have high aspirations
 Care, share and belong | Lead, teach and learn with passion.

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Homework ideas space! Plan your ideas from our homework launch.

