

Leavening Community Primary School

Conkers Newsletter Autumn Term 1 2026



Hello families,

Welcome back to the new school year! We hope that you have all enjoyed a wonderful summer holiday and that the children are feeling refreshed and ready for an exciting new term! A very special welcome goes out to our new Reception starters – we are so pleased to have you join our Conkers class family! The Conkers team are raring to go and cannot wait to establish our new class, get started on our new whole school topic of 'Evolution' and see where it takes us! Starting school again in September is a big transition for all young children – please rest assured that we are aware of this fact and endeavour to start the year slowly and carefully, with lots of fun and engaging activities planned for your children. Please see the curriculum breakdown for more detailed information about what your child will be learning this half term. If you do have any questions regarding the information in this newsletter or other more general queries, please don't hesitate to talk to us – our door is always open! Your child's happiness and welfare is paramount to us – we are a small, nurturing class and pride ourselves on our familial feel – please don't be a stranger!

Kind regards,

Mrs Bennett

For your information, P.E will take place on a Thursday afternoon (children may come to school wearing their P.E kit). Forest Schools will take place on a Wednesday afternoon (on this day, please ensure that children bring some waterproof clothing and wellies to school with them – thank you!).

This half term, we will be learning about:

English – Reception: This term, the children will begin their exciting reading journey! We will be using the Little Wandle Phonics programme to develop their early phonics skills and build confidence with reading. More information about this will be shared with you very soon, so don't worry! The children will be introduced to Mighty Writer this term, an engaging approach to writing that helps children develop their storytelling, vocabulary and sentence-building skills. Through pictures, actions and lots of discussion, the children will learn to build and say sentences before having a go at recording their ideas in later terms. We will be encouraging a love of books, stories, mark-making and writing through lots of fun, purposeful activities throughout the term.

Key Stage 1: In Literacy, the children will be developing their writing using two fantastic books as starting points. We will begin with *How to Get Your Teacher Ready for School*, where the children will explore instructional writing, learning how to write clear, sequenced instructions using interesting vocabulary and effective sentences. We will then move on to *If Sharks Disappeared*, where the children will develop their non-fiction writing skills, finding out about sharks and their importance to our oceans. Throughout both units, the children will continue to develop their vocabulary, sentence structure, punctuation and ability to organise and communicate their ideas clearly.

Maths - Reception: This term in maths, the children will explore how objects can be grouped and matched in different ways, such as by colour, size, or shape. They will practise sorting items and noticing similarities and differences, helping them to develop early problem-solving and reasoning skills. Through hands-on activities and play, the children will build important foundations for number work by learning to look closely, spot patterns, and make comparisons

Year 1: This term in maths, we will begin with *Place value within 10*, following the White Rose scheme of learning. The children will practise counting forwards and backwards, recognising numbers as words and digits, and representing them in different ways. They will explore the idea of “more than” and “less than” and begin to understand the value each number holds.

Once secure with this, we will move on to *Addition and Subtraction within 10*. The children will use practical resources, drawings, and number lines to solve problems, building fluency and confidence with number bonds. This will give them strong foundations for future maths learning and help them see the links between counting, adding, and taking away.

Year 2: This term in maths, we will begin with *Place value*, following the White Rose scheme of learning. The children will build on their Year 1 knowledge by working with numbers to 100. They will practise counting forwards and backwards, recognising the tens and ones in a number, and using different representations to show their understanding. This will help them develop confidence in comparing, ordering, and reasoning with numbers.

Once secure, we will move on to *Addition and Subtraction*. The children will explore different strategies to add and subtract, including using number bonds, number lines, and practical resources. They will also begin to solve simple problems and explain their thinking, helping them to develop fluency and flexibility with numbers.

Science: In Science, the children will be learning all about seasonal change. We will explore the four seasons and talk about the changes we can see in the weather, plants, animals and the world around us. The children will have lots of opportunities to observe what is happening outdoors, collect and investigate natural objects, and begin to notice patterns and changes as we move through the year. We will encourage their curiosity by asking questions, making observations and talking about what we discover together.

History: In History, the children will be learning about the fascinating life of Mary Anning, a famous fossil hunter from Lyme Regis. We will find out about her childhood, her discoveries and how she helped us to understand more about dinosaurs and prehistoric life. The children will have opportunities to explore fossils, make observations and learn about how Mary Anning's discoveries have helped to shape our understanding of the past.

R.E: In RE this half term, the children will be exploring some important questions about belonging and belief:

Reception will be thinking about the question "Where do we belong?" They will explore the different groups and communities they are part of, such as family, friends, and school. Through stories, play and discussion, they will reflect on what makes them feel special and valued, and how we show that we care for one another.

Key Stage One - In RE, the children will be exploring the question "What does it mean to belong to a faith community?" We will learn about how Christians, Muslims and Jewish people show that they belong to their faith through places of worship, special celebrations, prayer, stories, symbols and the ways they help and care for others. The children will have opportunities to talk about what belonging means to them and make links with their own experiences of being part of a family, school or community.

Music: As musicians we will be exploring long and short sounds linking to rhythm as well as learning about pulse. We will be making long and short sounds using our voices and percussion instruments. We will be exploring rhythm grids and learning about crotchets and quavers. We will be singing lots of songs to explore duration and building our repertoire of nursery rhymes. We will also prepare the songs for the Christmas Production.

French: As French linguists we will be recalling and learning numbers up to 12 in French and playing games to use and recognise them. We will greet each other in French and ensure we know the days of the week. We are securing our knowledge of colours and learning a wider range of colours. We will learn some French words for parts of the face and body and link these into Christmas characters. We will be using our listening, speaking, reading and writing skills alongside singing songs and reading some stories.

Computing: In Computing, the children will be exploring "Technology All Around Us." They will discover the different types of technology we use in our everyday lives and begin to understand how technology helps us at home, at school and in the wider world. Through practical activities and discussions, the children will learn to recognise technology, talk about what it is used for and develop their confidence in using technology safely and responsibly.

Art: In Art, the children will focus on drawing and exploring. They will have lots of opportunities to experiment with different drawing techniques, materials and ideas, developing their confidence and creativity as artists. Through playful and practical

activities, the children will explore how they can use lines, shapes, marks and textures to express their ideas and make their own creative choices.

P.E: On Thursday afternoons, all of the children will benefit from PE lessons delivered by a specialist coach from Malton Sports Partnership. The children will be developing their skills through invasion games, learning to work as part of a team, move effectively, control equipment and develop their throwing, catching and movement skills. We are looking forward to getting active, having fun and developing our confidence in PE!

Forest school - During Forest School, the children will have lots of opportunities to explore and learn in the natural environment. They will develop their confidence, independence and teamwork through a range of practical, hands-on activities, while learning to care for and respect the world around them. We will explore nature, use natural materials, develop outdoor skills and enjoy seasonal changes, all while having lots of fun and making exciting discoveries!

Learning at home

Reception

Maths: Encourage your child to sort toys, clothes, or household objects into groups (e.g. "Let's put all the red cars together"). Play simple matching games, such as pairing socks or finding two objects that are the same. Talk with your child about how things are similar or different ("Which apple is bigger? Which spoon is shiny?"). Go on a "sorting walk" outside – look for natural objects like leaves, sticks, or stones and see how they can be grouped

Understanding the World:

Become a Seasonal Detective!

Go on a seasonal detective walk with your grown-up. Explore your garden, local park or even look out of a window and see what changes you can spot in the world around you.

Look for:

- Changes to the leaves
- Flowers and plants
- What the weather is like
- Animals and birds
- Changes to trees
- What people are wearing

Expressive Arts and Design

Choose something interesting to look at closely – perhaps a favourite toy, a leaf, a flower or something around your home. Can you draw what you see? Think carefully about the lines, shapes, patterns and details you can spot. You can use pencils, crayons, felt tips or anything else you enjoy drawing with. Most importantly, have fun exploring and experimenting with your ideas!

Years 1 & 2

Maths: Year 1: Practise counting forwards and backwards to 10, starting from different numbers. Play number spotting games around the house or outside (e.g. spotting numbers on doors, buses, or signs). Use everyday objects like buttons, pasta, or coins to make simple addition and subtraction stories (e.g. “You had 6 grapes, you ate 2 – how many are left?”). Encourage your child to explain their thinking when solving problems – talking about numbers helps build confidence and understanding

Year 2: Practise counting to 100, forwards and backwards and challenge your child to start from different numbers. Spot and talk about two-digit numbers in the environment (e.g. house numbers, bus numbers, prices). Ask: “How many tens and ones are in this number?” use objects around the house (coins, Lego, pasta) to make groups of tens and ones, helping your child to visualise numbers. Play quick-fire games with number bonds to 10 and 20 (e.g. “I say 7, you say...” and your child replies with 3). Encourage your child to explain their strategies when adding or subtracting (“How did you work it out?”)

Science: This term, we would like the children to become Seasonal Scientists! With a grown-up, take a walk around your local area and look carefully for signs of the season. Can you spot any changes in the weather, trees, plants, animals or daylight? Choose one change that you notice and record it in a way you enjoy – you could draw a picture, take a photograph, write a sentence or collect some safe natural objects. We would love to share your seasonal discoveries in class!

Literacy: We would love the children to read at home as much as possible, even if it is just for five minutes each day. Sharing stories, reading their school reading books and talking about what they have read are all fantastic ways to develop their reading skills and foster a love of books. We would also like the children to spend a little time practising their number formation, helping them to develop confidence and accuracy when writing their numbers.

