

Dear Parents and Carers,

January has been an incredibly busy and productive month at Hannah Ball Academy! We are thrilled to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our three outstanding mathematicians who represented us in The Park Federation Maths Challenge. Their resilience and curiosity shone through as they tackled each problem, leading our team to an impressive 4th place out of 9 schools. This remarkable achievement fills us with pride and showcases the talent and determination of our pupils!



We are thrilled to share some of the highlights from this term, including:

- **Student Achievements:** Celebrating individual and group accomplishments that reflect hard work and dedication.
 - **Fun Activities:** Engaging lessons that inspire collaboration and foster a love for learning.
 - **Special Events:** Memorable experiences that have enriched our students' educational journey.
- Join us in celebrating the incredible progress and joy our students have experienced this term!

L. Machingauta, Principal

Should my child come to school if they are unwell?

This can be a difficult decision to make. With some illnesses it is very clear. However, with general coughs, colds and viruses it can be more complicated. A good guide is that if they are a running a temperature and have a fever, they should be staying at home. Otherwise, send them to school and we will certainly contact you if they are struggling.

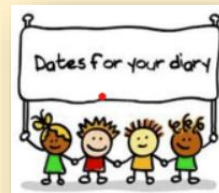
There is some guidance here from the NHS which clearly outlines when children should be kept off school for particular conditions: [NHS Guidance](#)

The most common illnesses that you may want information on are listed below:

- **Vomiting or diarrhoea**- your child must stay at home until 48 hours have passed since the last incident.
- **Chicken pox**- your child must stay at home until the spots have started to scab over.
- **Head lice**- children can be in school but should be treated as soon as possible.
- **Conjunctivitis**- children can be in school but should be treated as soon as possible.



January 2025
Year 5 - 95.4%
Year 2 - 94.5%
Year 3 - 94.1%



Children's Mental Health Week: 3rd -9th February 2025

Safer Internet Day: Tuesday 11th February 2025

February Half-Term: Monday 17th February -Friday 21st February 2025

Spring 2 Term begins: Monday 24th February 2025

Phonics Workshop Year 1 Parents: Tuesday 4th March 2025

Year 1 Visit to Union Baptist Church: Thursday 6th March 2025

Year 6 SATs Information Morning & Afternoon: Thursday 6th March 2025

World Book Day Celebration Friday 7th March 2025

Reception Class Visit to Union Baptist Church: Friday 7th March 2025

Year 2 Visit to Union Baptist Church: Thursday 13th March 2025

Year 3 Visit to Union Baptist Church: Friday 14th March 2025

Parent's Coffee Morning & Curriculum Information: Tuesday 18th March 2025

Reception Class Trip to Odds Farm: Tuesday 1st April

End of Spring Term: Friday 4th April 2025



At Hannah Ball Academy, we feel it is really important to work with parents/carers and with the agencies that support schools and families so that we can provide a safe environment that educates pupils of risks they may face and how they can respond to them in a safe manner. In this month's edition we will cover Sextortion.

What is sextortion? Sextortion is a form of online exploitation where a perpetrator coerces or blackmails a victim into providing explicit videos or images.

How to protect your child from Sextortion

Educate about online safety:

Teach your child not to share personal information, photos or videos online.



Supervise digital activities
Monitor your child's use of social media, games, and messaging apps. Use parental controls to restrict access to inappropriate content or contact.



Encourage open communication
Create a safe environment where your child feels comfortable sharing any online experiences that make them uneasy



Stay informed and proactive
Stay aware of the apps and their risks. Watch for warning signs such as behavioural changes, secrecy, or unusual online activity



What parents need to know about sextortion

Sextortion is a serious online threat that can target anyone, but children are particularly vulnerable. There has been a recent rise in primary school aged children being targeted because they may not fully understand the risks and are easier to manipulate.

How Sextortion Works?

- **Initial contact:** predators often contact children through social media, gaming platforms, or messaging apps. They may pose as someone the child's age, a mutual friend, or even someone the child knows.
- **Building trust:** predators use friendly conversations, compliments, and subtle manipulation to gain a child's trust. They may pretend to share common interests or act like a peer.
- **Obtaining explicit material:** through their grooming tactics, predators may persuade children to share private photos or videos. They may even send fake images of themselves to make the child feel more comfortable.
- **Blackmail:** once the predator has compromising material, they use it to blackmail the child. They might threaten to share the material with friends, family, or online unless the child sends more explicit content or even money.

Artificial intelligence: the use of AI has significantly increased the risks of sextortion for children by making it easier for perpetrators to create realistic fake identities, manipulate content and exploit vulnerabilities. AI can generate deep fake images or videos that appear to show the victim, even if they've never shared explicit material of this kind.



Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Hannah Ball Academy's Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Ruby, Mrs Machingauta, Mrs Gill and Mrs Devine.



Well-Being



As part of our commitment to supporting the well-being of our pupils, we are excited to inform you that this week marks Children's Mental Health which runs from 3rd - 9th February 2025.

The theme for 2025 is Know Yourself, Grow Yourself, with the aim to equip and empower children and young people across the UK to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them.

We want children and young people to discover how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop.

Throughout the week, we will be engaging our pupils in various activities designed to promote mental well-being. These will include:

- **Classroom discussions** about emotions and mental health.
- **Creative projects** that encourage self-expression.
- **Mindfulness exercises** to help manage stress and anxiety.

How can you help your children?



Be there to listen

Regularly ask how they're doing so they get used to talking about their feelings and know there's always someone to listen if they want it. Find out how to create a space where they will open up.



Take what they say seriously

Listening to and valuing what they say, without judging their feelings, in turn makes them feel valued. Consider how to help them process and work through their emotions in a more constructive way.



Support them through difficulties

Pay attention to their emotions and behaviour, and try to help them work through difficulties. It's not always easy when faced with challenging behaviour, but try to help them understand what they're feeling and why.



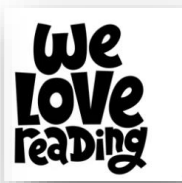
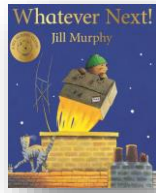
Encourage their interests

Being active or creative, learning new things and being a part of a team help connect us with others and are important ways we can all help our mental health. Support and encourage them to explore their interests, whatever they are.



Build positive routines

We know it still may not be easy, but try to continue with structure around regular routines, healthy eating and exercise. A good night's sleep is also really important.



Happy New Year!

We hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable break! It was wonderful to see the children return to school brimming with excitement as they shared stories about their Christmas gifts and holiday adventures. Their enthusiasm was truly infectious!



This month, Reception has embarked on an exciting new topic: "What Happens When We Fall Asleep?" This theme allows us to explore the fascinating world of space and rockets. Our role-play area has been transformed into a Space Station, where children can immerse themselves in imaginative journeys into the cosmos!

In maths, the children have been exploring the concept of doubling. They worked collaboratively in pairs to create different doubles up to 10, reinforcing their understanding through hands-on activities.



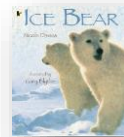
Additionally, we have been busy learning about the **Lunar New Year**. The children enjoyed practising some Chinese writing and even created their very own paper chain Chinese dragons. It was a delightful experience filled with creativity and cultural appreciation!



Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to another exciting month of learning!



Year 1 Highlights



Here are some highlights from our recent learning experiences:

In Geography, we explored the changing seasons and created beautiful artwork that showcases the transformations that trees undergo throughout the year. This hands-on project allowed pupils to express their creativity while deepening their understanding of seasonal changes.

In our Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) lessons, we delved into the world of dreams and goals. Through discussions about our achievements, pupils reflected on their aspirations and the steps they can take to reach them.

In Religious Education pupils learned valuable lessons on how to be kind and supportive towards one another, fostering a sense of community and empathy within our classroom.

In English, we discovered fascinating facts about polar animals and their incredible characteristics. Using adjectives, adverbs, and verbs, Year 1 pupils wrote their own stories by adapting our focus story, "Leaf." This exercise not only enhanced their writing skills but also encouraged them to use descriptive language effectively.



We had a fantastic time navigating our way around, using compass directions to find specific locations. This hands-on activity not only enhanced our understanding of directions but also offered opportunities for team work.

In our recent PSHE lesson, we focused on the importance of setting goals and taking actionable steps to achieve them. This engaging session allowed pupils to understand the process of planning and preparation necessary for success.

To make this lesson memorable, we had a fantastic time making jam sandwiches! This hands-on activity not only reinforced our learning about goal-setting but also provided a fun and interactive way to practice preparing for success. Pupils learned how to follow a sequence of steps, work collaboratively, and enjoy the fruits of their labour.



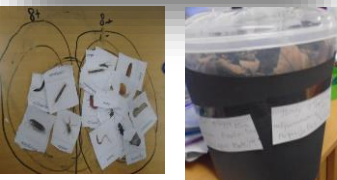
As we approach the February half term break, I want to take a moment to express how much of a pleasure it has been to teach and support your children throughout Year 1. Their enthusiasm and curiosity have made this term truly enjoyable.

We wish you a fun-filled break, full of memorable moments with your family. We look forward to welcoming everyone back after the half term, ready to continue our learning adventures together!

Thank you for your continued support!



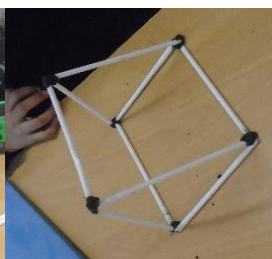
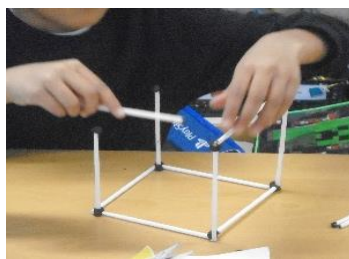
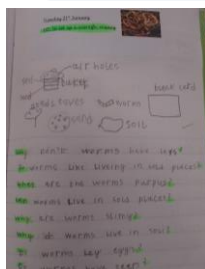
I am thrilled to share the wonderful progress Year 2 has been making in their writing lessons! The pupils have been working diligently to create their own stories, focusing on problem and resolution narratives. They have effectively incorporated various writing skills we have learned this year, including: Exciting sentence starters, engaging ways to begin their sentences. Pupils used adverbs, adding detail to their verbs to enhance their writing. They also expanded their vocabulary by adding suffixes to root words. In our reading sessions, we have been exploring the diverse countries of Africa. The pupils have enjoyed discovering what makes each country unique and special.



In our recent Art lessons, Year 2 has been immersing themselves in the vibrant works of artists Hundertwasser and Gaudi. Under the guidance of Mrs. Dear, the pupils have been inspired by the unique styles and techniques of these renowned artists. The children have crafted a variety of beautiful clay pots and tiles. They have experimented with different textures and patterns, allowing their creativity to shine through. By studying Hundertwasser's use of bold colours and organic shapes, as well as Gaudi's intricate designs and forms, the pupils have gained a deeper appreciation for artistic expression.



Year 2 has been actively exploring the fascinating world of minibeasts! Our learning has been hands-on and inquiry-based, allowing the pupils to develop their Super Science Skills. The pupils generated excellent questions about worms, demonstrating their curiosity and critical thinking. This inquiry-driven approach is essential for developing a scientific mind-set. We set up a worm 'hotel' and placed some worms inside to observe their activities in the soil over time. This experiment allows the children to see first hand how worms interact with their environment, contributing to soil health and aeration. Over the term, we will monitor and document the changes we observe, fostering a deeper understanding of the role of worms in our ecosystem. In addition to our worm investigations, we have explored the characteristics of various mini-beasts. The pupils have used their grouping skills to sort and classify these creatures based on different criteria, such as size, colour, habitat, and number of legs. This activity enhances their understanding of biodiversity and the diversity of life within our environment.



The pupils have been actively engaged in creating 3D shapes using straws and playdough. This hands-on activity has allowed them to count the edges, faces, and vertices of each shape. By constructing these shapes, the children can visualise and understand the properties of 3D objects more effectively than if they were simply looking at 2D representations on paper.

We have also been working on division by 2, using cubes and groups to demonstrate how to show half of a quantity. This practical approach helps solidify their understanding of division concepts.

This week, we have introduced the topic of Money. The pupils are learning to count pounds and pence, which is an essential life skill.

To reinforce their learning, any real-life counting of coins that your child can do at home would be incredibly beneficial. You could:

- Have your child sort different coins by type and value.
- Shopping Role Play: Set up a mini shop at home where your child can 'buy' items using play money. Encourage them to count out the correct amount for each purchase.
- Real-life Transactions: Involve your child in real shopping situations, asking them to help count out money when making purchases.

This term in PSHE and RE, Year 2 has been engaged in meaningful activities that foster collaboration and deepen their understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Here are some highlights from our learning:

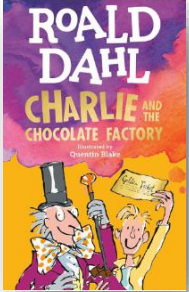
The pupils have been working together as a team to complete a group challenge. This experience has encouraged them to develop essential teamwork skills, such as communication, cooperation, and problem-solving.

In our RE lessons, we are exploring why prayer is so important to Muslims. The children are learning about the different steps involved in prayer and the significance of each step.

We are fortunate to have knowledgeable pupils in our class, including some from Year 2 and Year 6, who have been demonstrating and sharing their personal experiences of prayer. This peer-led sharing enriches our discussions and provides authentic insights into the role of prayer in their lives and families.



This term, our Year 3 students have been diving into a world of exciting learning adventures, showcasing remarkable enthusiasm for the subjects they are exploring. From tackling new topics in English and Mathematics to embarking on hands-on science experiments and creative art projects, the classroom is bursting with creativity and curiosity.!



In English, our Year 3 pupils have been captivated by the classic story Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. This enchanting tale has sparked their imaginations and led to exciting discussions about the whimsical world of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory.

As part of our exploration, the students have delved into the fascinating world of chocolate, learning about its origins and the intricate process of how it is made.



In Geography, we have shifted our focus to the journey of our food, investigating where it comes from. The children have discovered the various regions around the world where essential ingredients for chocolate are grown, including cocoa beans, sugar, and milk. They have learned how these ingredients travel from farms to factories before finally reaching our homes.

This integrated approach has provided a fun and educational way for the children to connect their reading with real-world geography. They have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the global journey of chocolate and its significance in our lives!

Chocolate: From bean to bar



Exploring the Fascinating World of Light and Shadows in Year 3!

In Science, our Year 3 students have been diving into the captivating world of light and shadows. They have been conducting a variety of experiments using different materials, including translucent, transparent, and opaque objects, to investigate how light behaves as it passes through them.

The children have explored whether light can pass through these materials and observed how the size and shape of shadows change depending on the type of material used. Some of the exciting objects they experimented with include:

- Allowing light to pass through, creating faint shadows.
- Diffusing light and producing softer, blurred shadows.
- Blocking light completely, resulting in sharp, defined shadows.

Throughout these hands-on activities, the students carefully recorded their findings to see how each material affects the amount of light that gets through and the sharpness of the shadows that form.



This interactive approach has provided the children with a deeper understanding of how light travels and interacts with objects in our everyday world. It has been an exciting journey of discovery, and the students have thoroughly enjoyed seeing science come to life in such a fun and engaging way!

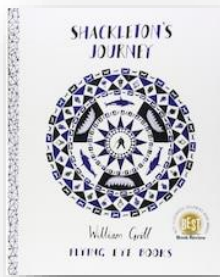


This term, Year 4 has been captivated by the inspiring story of Ernest Shackleton and his heroic expedition to Antarctica. Our exploration of this remarkable journey has not only engaged the pupils but has also served as a powerful stimulus for their writing.

We have been reading a book based on the events of Shackleton's epic voyage, which has sparked lively discussions among the pupils. They have been fascinated by the challenges faced by Shackleton and his crew, including extreme weather conditions and the struggle for survival. The story highlights incredible perseverance and teamwork in the face of adversity. These themes resonate with our school values of resilience and responsibility, providing a meaningful context for our lessons.

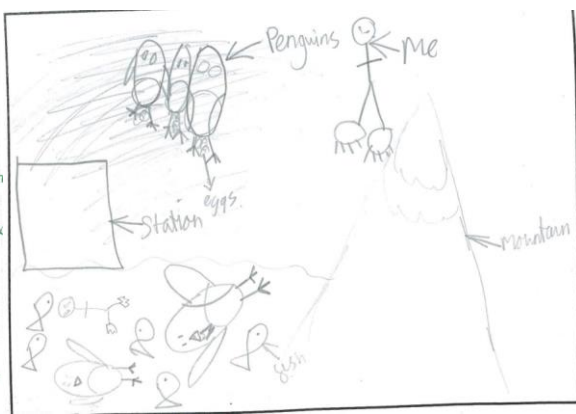
Inspired by Shackleton's journey, the pupils have begun crafting their own narratives. They are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings about the challenges faced by the crew, using descriptive language to bring their stories to life.

We are also incorporating reflective writing, where pupils can share what they have learned about courage, determination, and the importance of working together as a team.



Our studies have provided the pupils with a deeper understanding of this unique environment and its geographical significance. We have investigated significant lines of longitude and latitude, which are crucial for understanding global positioning. The pupils learned about the physical features of Antarctica, including its vast ice sheets and unique landscapes. The children discovered that Antarctica is not only the largest desert in the world but also home to Mount Erebus, an active volcano. These intriguing facts have sparked curiosity and excitement about this remote continent.

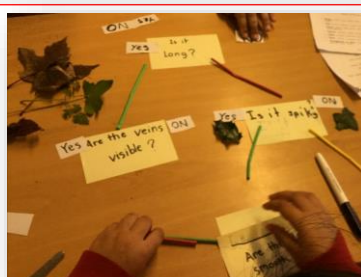
Dear Fredrik and Dad
 It is a curious place Antarctica. As it is winter we don't have any sun light so we have barely seen anything. Mountains surround us and that is pretty all I know. Yesterday, I went into the sea and saw a little seal. I have not got frost bight because I wear a thick gleees and spiked boots.



Dear Mom
 It was the most amazing day of my life. I am learning about Wildlife. There is constant daylight. I saw a plane with skis on the wheel. The temperature is about -30 degrees, the most is -40. I usually get frostbites. None one permanently lives in Antarctica. I have to wear layered clothes and boots that have spikes on them.
 Miss you, from Ashika

Science: Living Things and Their Environments

This term in Science, Year 4, has taken an exciting turn as we venture outdoors to explore how scientists group living things. Our hands-on approach has allowed the pupils to engage with their environment while learning about classification. We began our exploration by discussing the characteristics that define living things. The pupils learned about the essential features that distinguish living organisms from non-living things, such as growth, reproduction, and response to stimuli. Our outdoor activities included collecting leaves and spotting birds. The pupils enjoyed observing the different species in their natural habitat, which enhanced their understanding of biodiversity. Using the leaves and birds we collected, the pupils created classification keys to group them based on yes or no questions. This activity not only reinforced their understanding of classification but also developed their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.



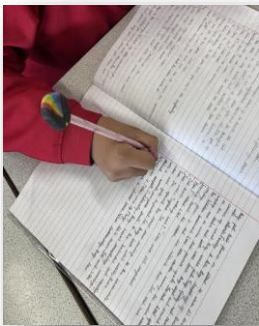


January has been an exciting month for our Year 5 class as we delved into the art of suspense writing. The students have been crafting thrilling stories designed to keep readers on the edge of their seats, showcasing their creativity and storytelling skills. In Mathematics, we wrapped up our work on fractions and transitioned into exploring multiplication and division. The students have been engaging with these concepts through practical activities and problem-solving exercises, enhancing their numerical understanding.

In Science, we embarked on a fascinating journey into the life cycles of different animal groups. The pupils have been learning about the unique characteristics and stages of life for various species, fostering their curiosity about the natural world. Overall, January has been a month filled with learning, growth, and discovery for our Year 5 class. We look forward to continuing this journey of exploration in the coming months!



Book of the Month



Unleashing Creativity in English: Exploring the Art of Suspense Writing!

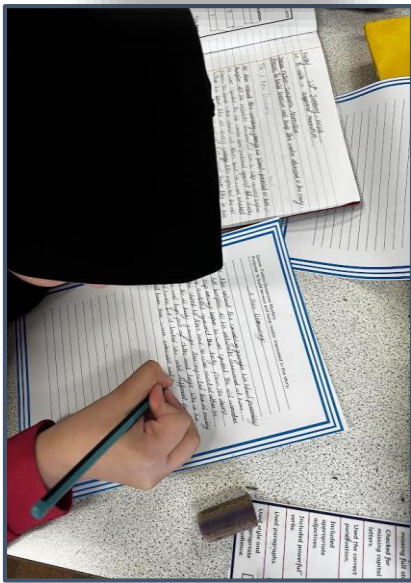
In English class, our Year 5 students have been diving deep into the elements of suspense writing. They are learning how to create tension through various techniques, including:

Figurative Language: Students are discovering how to use similes, metaphors, and personification to bring their characters to life.

Show, Don't Tell: We emphasise the importance of illustrating characters' emotions through actions and dialogue, allowing readers to infer feelings rather than simply stating them.

Descriptive Language: The pupils are honing their skills in crafting vivid descriptions that appeal to the five senses, setting the scene and immersing readers in the story.

As part of our exploration, we have been using our class reader, *Skellig*, to see how the author masterfully employs these techniques to build suspense. From vividly describing characters' emotions to painting settings that make readers feel as though they are part of the narrative, the students have gained valuable insights into effective storytelling. Inspired by these methods, the pupils have begun applying what they've learned to their own suspense stories. They are crafting gripping narratives that engage readers' imaginations and keep them on the edge of their seats!



In science class, our Year 5 students have been immersed in the fascinating world of life cycles. They have been learning about the unique stages of development for various animal groups, including: **Birds, Mammals, Reptiles and Fish.**

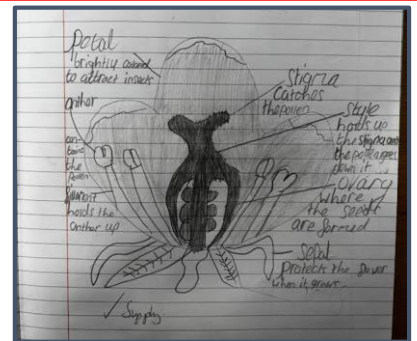
Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, the pupils have discovered how each group has its own distinct life cycle, highlighting the incredible diversity of growth and reproduction in the animal kingdom.

Additionally, we have explored the life cycles of different plants. The students have learned about the various parts of a plant, including:

Roots, Stem, Leaves and Flowers

Each part plays a crucial role in the plant's growth and development. By comparing the life cycles of animals and plants, our pupils have gained a deeper appreciation for the remarkable processes that underpin life in the natural world.

This exploration has not only enriched their scientific understanding but has also fostered a sense of wonder about the interconnectedness of all living things.



This month has been full of laughter, hard work and dedication. I am very proud of the extra work the Year 5s have been putting into their work everyday to expand their knowledge. I am looking forward to what this next month will bring to our classroom. Well done!



We are thrilled to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our three brilliant mathematicians—Logan, Adiva, and Sana—who represented Hannah Ball Academy in The Park Federation Maths Challenge!

These talented pupils tackled each problem with remarkable resilience and curiosity, showcasing their mathematical skills and teamwork. Their hard work and determination paid off as they earned an impressive **4th place out of 9 schools**. This achievement is a testament to their dedication and the supportive learning environment we strive to cultivate at our school. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and look forward to seeing more of our pupils shine in future challenges!



Anjola

In our Art classes, Year 5 has embarked on an exciting themed project centred around Evolution. The pupils have begun designing striking Darwin's Dragon eyes, focusing on exploring texture and detail to bring their creations to life.

Additionally, they are working on intricate 3D tape sculptures, showcasing their artistic skills and imagination. The creativity of our students truly shines as they express their understanding of evolution through their artwork.

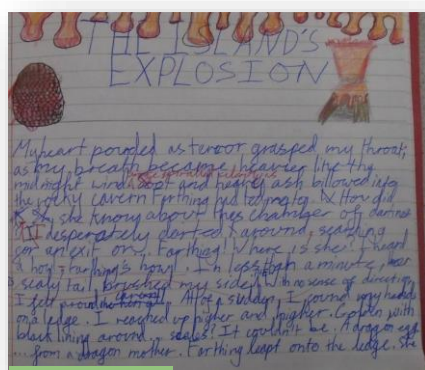
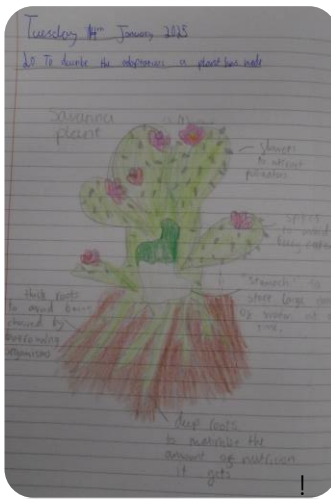
Year 6 Shines in National Storytelling Week Assembly!

This week, our talented Year 6 pupils embraced the exciting challenge of leading the National Storytelling Week Assembly for the entire school. Utilising their oracy skills, they presented imaginative fairy-tale mashups, delighting their peers with expressive performances that captivated the audience. The creativity and enthusiasm displayed by the students not only showcased their storytelling abilities but also fostered a love for literature and the art of performance among their classmates. This initiative not only enhanced their confidence in public speaking but also encouraged a sense of community as they shared their unique interpretations of beloved tales. We are incredibly proud of Year 6 for their hard work and dedication in making this assembly a memorable experience for everyone.

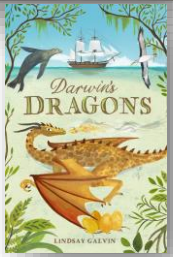
NSW presenters

In Science, this creativity continues to flourish as the children have invented some truly unique **plants adapted to different biomes**. Each plant has been carefully thought out to survive in its specific environment, demonstrating the pupils' understanding of adaptation and the vital role it plays in the survival of species.

This interdisciplinary approach not only enhances their learning experience but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of art and science in understanding the natural world.



Esterlyn



We are excited to announce that Year 6 has successfully wrapped up their first piece of **fiction writing** for the term! This milestone showcases the strong writing skills that our pupils have been diligently developing.

It has been truly wonderful to witness their **creativity and mastery of language** come to life on the page. Each story reflects their unique voices and imaginative ideas, demonstrating their growth as confident writers.

As we move into February, we eagerly anticipate even more exciting learning opportunities and achievements. A huge well done to Year 6 for their hard work and dedication—keep shining!