

Kindness and Co-operation	Thankfulness	Friendship and Sharing	Respect	Unity	Responsibility
Hope and Peace	Patience and Perseverance	Trust and Honesty	Happiness	Courage	



**MAPLE TREE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Learning. Equality. Achievement. Friendship.

# Newsletter

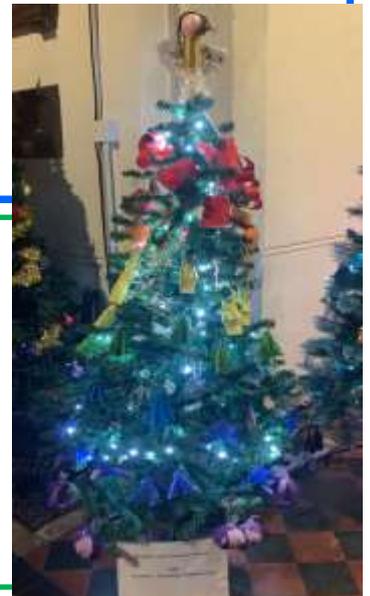
Friday 6th December 2024

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

We have had lots of trips and visits so far this term. These are really valuable in giving children experiences in more visual and real life opportunities. These support the work that is done in the classroom and enable the children to become more immersed in their learning. In this newsletter there are a few updates as to things our pupils have been involved in and I am sure there will be more before the end of the term.

As you will see in these write ups, we have shared some photos that have been taken. We take photos to capture the moments but with a keen eye on ensuring that safeguarding remains a priority, therefore we ask that you do not take photos or videos during the Christmas assemblies (and other school events). We will take some to put onto the website so that you can look at these but we have a number of children who do not have photo permissions and we need to ensure we are keeping these children from public view. You will be reminded of this at the start of the events but if you see others taking photos, please gently remind them too.

I hope you all have a good weekend.



### Christmas Tree Festival

We hope you had a chance to visit St. Swithun's Church this week to see our beautiful Christmas tree, in their annual Christmas Tree Festival.

Our tree this year, entitled 'Our Tree of Uni-tree', was themed around our value of unity. We all had a colour from the rainbow and discussed as classes how unity shows togetherness. The children and grandparents enjoyed creating colourful decorations during our recent Grandparents Breakfast morning.



### Carols on the Playground

3.40pm Friday 13th December

Join us to sing some carols by candlelight with the children on the playground (weather permitting).



Thank you so very much to everyone who bought books from the book fair. The fair sold a massive XXXXX pounds worth of books which means we now have XXXXX to spend on new books for school!

Although some of the books could be found a few pounds cheaper online, by supporting the book fair you are helping school massively and for that we are grateful.

This is an incredible amount to spend and I look forward to showing you all the great books that we will be buy-

Maple Tree Primary School, Hawk Drive, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WA

Tel: 01767 699806 Web: [www.mapletreepriamaryschool.com](http://www.mapletreepriamaryschool.com)

Emails: [office@mapletreepriamaryschool.com](mailto:office@mapletreepriamaryschool.com) or [teacher@mapletreepriamaryschool.com](mailto:teacher@mapletreepriamaryschool.com)

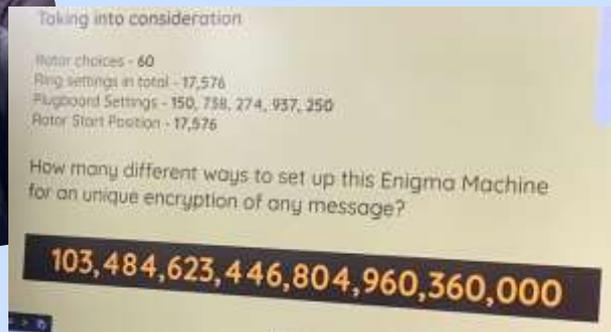
## Elder Class Visit to Bletchley Park

On Monday, we travelled to Bletchley Park for a trip that enhances our learning about World War II. We learned lots more about code-breaking and what the men and women at Bletchley did to help us win the war. We took part in a workshop where we had to decipher Morse Code and other ciphers, including Pig Pen.



We were able to spend time looking around the huts where we saw Alan Turing's office and an amazing exhibit about the Bombe. On display are many Enigma machines and we were lucky enough to touch one!

We also took part in a guided tour where some of us role-played characters who worked at Bletchley Park.



## Sandy Light Switch on Stars!

Last Sunday was the annual Sandy Light Switch on and we were lucky enough to have our wonderful choir perform on stage. The children sang four songs and used their bells to really embrace the Christmas feel. They sang beautifully and it was lovely to see that there was no stage fright as they all gathered in their places and sang their hearts out. They were loud, clear and confident and I couldn't be more proud. This Sunday we do it all again as we sing at the Mayor's Carol Service at St Swithun's Church. I am sure they will be just as fabulous.



### DATES FOR THE DIARY

**Wednesday 11th December** School Pantomime

**Thursday 12th December at 2.30pm** Parent Forum

**Thursday 12th and Friday 13th December** FoMT Elfridges shop

**Friday 13th December** UKS2 Christmas assembly – 9:15-9:45am

**Friday 13th December** Mulberries Christmas songs and stay – 11am-12pm

**Friday 13th December** Carols on the playground- 3:40pm

**Monday 16th December** LKS2 Christmas assembly – 9:15-9:45am

**Monday 16th December** Mulberries Christmas songs and stay – 2:30-3:30pm

**Tuesday 17th December** Rock Steady Concert

**Tuesday 17th December** KS1 Christmas assembly – 9:15-9:45am

**Wednesday 18th December** Reception Christmas assembly – 9:15-9:45am

Term dates for **2024-2025** can be found [here](#).

# A Focus on Writing

Teaching and learning about writing comes under two main strands:

Transcription

Composition



**Effective writing**

• **Transcription is the physical act of writing.** Learning to spell quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

• **Composition is all about the content of the writing.** It involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. In addition, pupils learn how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.

## Our Approach to Handwriting

**Early years begin by mark making.** Mark making describes the different lines, dots, marks, patterns, and textures we create in an artwork. It can be loose and gestural or controlled and neat.



**Be kind**

**Reception continue by writing unjoined letters.** They begin by writing non-cursive (not joined) lower case letter formation. They learn where to put their pen/pencil to

start and end each part of the letter. We have a consistent approach to how we teach this and encourage parents and carers to model this at home. To support you with this we have adapted a twinkl powerpoint and created a [video](#) for parents and carers to use at home.



**Be kind**

**Year 1 begin the journey to joined handwriting.** They learn pre-cursive letter formation, adding lead ins and outs to their letters but not joining them up fully. To support you with this we have adapted a twinkl powerpoint and created a [video](#) for parents and carers to use at home.

**Be kind**

**Year 2 learn to join their writing fully.** They use what they have learnt in year 1 to join all their letters together fluently (except capital letters).

*Mary Seacole was born on  
the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November  
1805 in Kingston Jamaica.*

**In year 3 and above,** pupils must maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed. They do not have to join every letter, rather make choices about which letters join fluently.

## Grandparents' Breakfast

Each year we invite the pupil's grandparents, or another significant grandparent figure, to join us for a festive breakfast at school followed by Christmas crafts in the classes.

This year saw 150 grandparents join their grandchildren for a festive breakfast in the school hall run completely by school staff and governors. Families enjoyed a hot bacon roll and a cup of tea, along with other breakfast items, served by their teachers, teaching assistants and even the Sandy Mayor.

Once everyone was full, the fun continued in the classrooms where the grandparents supported their grandchildren (or often the other way around!) to create unique Christmas decorations and other craft activities. These decorations are used to decorate our tree in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Swithun's Church in Sandy, but also all around the school.

We recognise that in many families, grandparents undertake a large portion of childcare and want to show their thanks and recognition through this event.

For those who do not have a significant person who is able to attend due to grandparents living too far away, work commitments or grandparents that are no longer with us, the school organised a memory tree. Children who wished to remember a loved one had the opportunity to hang a small note on the tree so that their loved one was remembered on this day. School staff hoped that this gesture helped all our children to feel included in celebrating all our wonderful grandparents.



## Autumn term in Yew class

### English

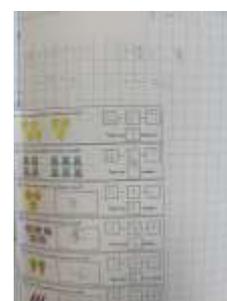
In English, we have been looking at the book *The Way Back Home* by Oliver Jeffers. We have sequenced the story, drawn a story map and created a story board using the key events. We will use these to help us re-tell the story in our own words.



### Maths

In maths, we have been learning our number bonds to ten and the children have learnt a rhyme to help them remember. We have also been adding 2 numbers together and will begin subtracting soon.

Number bond rhyme



### Science

In science, we have been looking at the seasons and how they change. We have written a weather diary comparing how the weather changes day by day. We drew a seasons bottle showing the different types of weather we are currently seeing.



### Design Technology

We have been learning about windmills, what they are used for and how they have changed over the years. We have been learning about the importance of stability whilst constructing our own windmill.



### Art

In art this term, we have been improving our skills in line drawing, discovering how different types of materials can create different effects. We went on a leaf hunt and chose a leaf to draw first using pencil and then we added some colour using oil pastels we have also designed our own mini-beast and will be using collage to complete these.



# Headteacher Awards

This week the awards are for... ..looking out for others!



<b>Fir:</b> Poppy	<b>Yew:</b> Arthur	<b>Aspen:</b> Lexxi-Jai
<b>Rowan:</b> Ella	<b>Poplar:</b> Sebastian	<b>Juniper:</b> Idelle
<b>Elder:</b> Imogen	Well done to you all!	★

This week's House Winners



Congratulations!

Weekly totals:

Buzzards 281	Robins 280
Doves 365	Ravens 364
Kingfishers 261	Swallows 255

# Celebrations and Weekly Wins!

stars of the Week!

For amazing computing this week!

Aspen: Riley  
Rowan: Sophie  
Poplar: Moni  
Juniper: Eryk  
Elder: Ronny

## Attendance Awards

Week beginning 2nd December 2024

The best attendance award is presented to:  
**Juniper** class this week!

<b>Mulberries</b> 91%	<b>Fir (YR)</b> 94%
<b>Yew (Y1)</b> 95%	<b>Aspen (Y2)</b> 96%
<b>Rowan (Y3)</b> 96%	<b>Poplar (Y4)</b> 97%
<b>Juniper (Y5)</b> 99% ★	<b>Elder (Y6)</b> 95%



# STREAKS, MEETS, AND SNAPS

## YOUR HOW-TO GUIDE TO SNAPCHAT FEATURES

SNAPCHAT is a social media platform used to share customisable photos, messages, and short-form videos referred to as 'Snaps' which can disappear after 24 hours. But this app isn't only for turning your messages into ghosts. It has a multitude of features that keep it fresh and current with young people today.

### SNAP MAP

- Shows real time location on an interactive map.
- Includes street, town/city, and building names.
- Options for 'meet up' and 'live location sharing' with friends.



Bitmoji



**CAUTION:** This feature is 'on' by default. You will need to activate 'Ghost Mode' to stop your location from appearing on the map.

### FILTERS

- A moving image 'overlayed' onto pictures and videos.
- Can range from colour changing to face/setting altering.
- A popular way for users to express themselves.



### DID YOU KNOW...

Snapchat is the original disappearing messages app! It's been around since 2011.



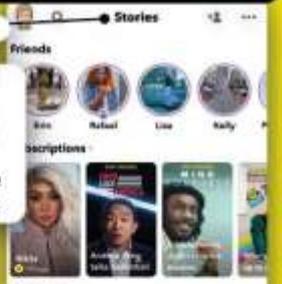
### STORIES

- Personalised images or videos on your profile.
- Can be seen by select friends, all friends, or wider public.
- Posts will last for 24 hours before disappearing forever.



### Stories

**NEVER FORGET**  
If you want to stop a snap or story from disappearing, it can be archived in 'Memories' to be timestamped and reshared.



### Discover

### DISCOVER

- A live news feed featuring Snapchat's chosen publishers.
- Wall Street Journal, ESPN, and others are included.
- Influencers and brands are also featured.



### THE PUBLIC EYE

Snapchat accounts must be 'public' to create Spotlight videos. This feature can be viewed and accessed by all users.



### SNAPSTREAKS

- Achieved when two users send messages daily for 3 or more days.
- Once reached, a flame emoji appears next to the friend's username.
- The number of days will appear as well to show how long the streak is.



### SPOTLIGHT

- Short form videos used for viral video content.
- Users can like, reply, and share with friends on Snapchat.
- Videos cannot be downloaded or shared to other platforms.



### ALL ABOUT SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat launched a premium option for its platform called 'Snapchat+' in June 2022 across the world. Described as having "exclusive, experimental and pre-release features", this paid version costs £3.99 per month and includes:



'Ghost Trails' - see up to 24 hours of a friend's shared location history.

'Story Rewatch Indicator' - view which users have rewatched a story.

'Friend Solar System' - use planetary order to highlight friendships.



### RISKS, RISKS, AND MORE RISKS

- AGE VERIFICATION** - there is currently no effective process to verify user age.
- STRANGER DANGER** - 'friending' users is easy and opens up direct contact.
- SCREENTIME OVERLOAD** - trends like 'Snapstreaks' could encourage bad habits.
- CYBERBULLYING** - disappearing messages may give bullies extra ammo online.
- EXPLICIT INTERACTIONS** - users may feel more comfortable 'sexting' others.
- PRESSURE** - users might experience pressure to send nude imagery to others.



### 'DISAPPEARING' DANGER

Just because images and videos 'disappear' within 24 hours doesn't mean that other users can't save them. Even though Snapchat tells you when another user screenshots your message, it does not consider secondary devices or video capturing software being used to record photos or videos.



### TOP TIPS

#### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIP CULTURE.

Remind young people that they should only ever share personal details with trusted friends who they know in-person.



#### TURN ON PRIVACY SETTINGS.

Explain the importance of protecting their privacy on apps where others may have access to their profile and their real-time location.



#### DISCUSS WHAT NOT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.

By talking through the false security of 'disappearing' messages, you can help them feel more confident saying "no."



#### REMINDE THEM WHO THEY CAN TALK TO.

Check that your young person knows who their trusted adults are and that they can turn to them if something happens.

