



Woodend Farm school
Kindness comes in many forms

WOODEND FARM SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

February 2026

A message from our Executive Headteacher..

As the sun begins to shine a little brighter and the first flowers start to emerge, it feels like the perfect reflection of the growth we are seeing all around the school. It has been such a pleasure to watch the progress of all your children and to be part of their unique journeys.

This month has been full of rich experiences. Our pupils have enjoyed Forest School sessions, explored the farm, and visited the zoo, each opportunity supporting their curiosity, confidence and love of learning. We were also delighted to welcome so many parents into school for our Online Safety Day; your involvement helps strengthen the partnership that sits at the heart of our community.

Across the school, we have watched pupils settle beautifully into routines, build positive relationships and truly live our school values. Their kindness, accountability and teamwork have shone through in so many moments, big and small.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to even more growth and sunshine in the weeks ahead.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTORAL LEAD...

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back after the half-term break. We hope you all enjoyed the week, even if the weather made it a little trickier to keep the children entertained. As we begin this next half term leading up to the Easter holidays, we are excited for the learning, fun, and new experiences planned here at Woodend Farm.

A reminder that World Book Day will take place on Friday 6th March. Children are warmly invited to come to school dressed as their favourite book characters. We are also delighted to welcome back the Scholastic Book Company, who will be visiting again this year. Parents and carers will be invited to join us, please keep an eye out for further details.

Please remember that good attendance is vital. Being in school every day helps children build social skills, emotional resilience, academic progress, and a strong sense of belonging within our Woodend Farm community.

As we (hopefully!) move toward warmer weather, please ensure children come to school with appropriate, clearly named clothing. Layers are especially helpful at this time of year as temperatures can still vary throughout the day.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended our recent Online Safety event with guest speaker Gareth. We hope you found the session informative and supportive in navigating children's digital lives.

We look forward to a positive and productive few weeks ahead.

Upcoming Events

World Book Day: 6th March 2026

Secondary Presentation & open day: 26th March 2026

Parent Book Fair: 17th April 2026

Term Dates

Spring Half Term 2: 23 Feb 2026 to 27th Mar 2026

Non Pupil Day: 15th Apr 2026

Summer Half Term 1: 14 Apr 2026 to 22 May 2026

Summer Half Term 2: 1 Jun 2026 to 20 Jul 2026

ROLE MODEL OF THE MONTH



Role of the Month goes to Hunter, who has made remarkable progress since joining our school.

Hunter consistently completes all of his work and puts in so much effort that he often earns the special reward of calling the dinosaurs after school and visiting Miss Steadman to proudly share what he has achieved.

He shows our school values every single day and has quickly become a wonderful part of our school community. We are incredibly proud of him and all he has accomplished.

ASH CLASS

This half-term, Ash Class stepped into the magical world of fairytales. We began Spring 1 by exploring well-known stories and identifying the features that make this genre so enchanting. The children have shown wonderful imagination – creating their very own stories, including exciting tales about poisonous lakes and adventures filled with rich descriptive language. Through this, we explored character personalities and features, helping the children develop confidence in using descriptive writing to bring their ideas to life. Miss Magnus absolutely loved reading every single story!

In maths, we moved into the world of column addition and subtraction. The children worked with great enthusiasm, following each step carefully and applying their understanding with growing accuracy and independence.

We were also incredibly proud to celebrate three Ash Class children who were recognised in the House Point winning group this half-term. This team demonstrated our school values so consistently that they played an important role in their group's success – a fantastic achievement!

Overall, we have had a brilliant half-term. The children have worked hard, retained so much new learning, and shown great enthusiasm every step of the way. As we finish our topic on fairytales, we are excited to journey into our next theme: The Wonderful World of Animals!



WILLOW CLASS

As we turn the final page on this half term's topic, "Once Upon a Time," we celebrate a month filled with imagination, storytelling, and creativity. The children have explored characters, settings, and adventures, and even written their own versions of our class story, The Enchanted Willow Tree. We then enjoyed sharing our stories with Beech Class and listening to the amazing tales they had written.

We were also visited by a storyteller, and the children loved joining in—adding their own twists and brilliant ideas to bring her stories to life.

In science, one of our learning objectives was to understand forces, focusing on push and pull. What better way to explore this than at Braintree Discovery Centre, where the children could see how their actions caused different equipment to move?

In humanities, we learned to locate castles on maps and on Google Earth before drawing our own maps for fairytale characters, plotting out the journeys they might take.

We are now looking forward to seeing what imagination our new topic, "Animals," inspires next half term.



BEECH CLASS

Animal Expressive Arts – Exploring Patterns!

In our Expressive Arts session, we explored animal patterns and experimented with different tools and techniques to create our very own prints for our classroom display.

The boys used a range of materials – chalk paints, regular paints, and tools like earbuds, paintbrushes, toothbrushes, and even their fingers to make unique textures and designs.

They made fantastic choices, tried out creative methods, and produced beautiful animal patterns that look amazing!

Wonderful artistic work, boys!



OAK CLASS

Over the past few weeks, Oak Class have been busy and brilliant in their learning. The boys have taken exceptional care of our guinea pigs, showing real gentleness, responsibility, and pride as they enjoyed giving them cuddles throughout the day.

We also had a fantastic Internet Safety Day, where the boys learned important skills about keeping their personal information safe online.

In PSHE and PE, the boys have been demonstrating wonderful teamwork and communication, supporting one another and celebrating each other's successes.

In Science, the boys have been investigating different materials. They have also been building their digital skills in Computing by using Scratch Jr to sequence instructions, create short animations.

Our new topic all about animals has been a huge hit—so far, the boys have loved going on bug hunts, creating model animals, exploring different habitats, and beginning to dive into animal poetry.

Throughout all of this, Oak Class have shown our school values in action: Respect, Kindness, Teamwork, Accountability, Believing, and Achieving. Well done Oak Class – great work!



MAPLE CLASS

Our animal topic is continuing to grow, and the children remain wonderfully enthusiastic as we explore even more fascinating ideas together!

In Science, we are continuing our journey into animal habitats. Each week, the children are discovering new environments and learning how different animals adapt to survive in their unique homes. Their curiosity has been fantastic to see!

In Art, we are still creating our own animal habitats, developing them with even more detail, imagination, and creativity. The children are really beginning to think like designers as they add textures, colours, and features to bring their habitats to life.

Our Literacy work is also ongoing as we dive deeper into the story Follow the Swallow. We continue to follow the little bird on his long journey to Africa, meeting new animals along the way and exploring themes of friendship, adventure, and communication.

In Maths, we are still working on animal counting and grouping, using practical activities to develop number skills in a fun, meaningful way. This topic will keep evolving as we introduce new challenges linked to animals and nature.

This is a rich, exciting topic that we will be building on over the coming weeks. The children are engaged, inspired, and eager to learn more – and we can't wait to see where our animal adventures take us next!



PE UPDATE

Recently in PE we have started using high level Sports like Hockey and Football to develop the student's ability to change direction at speed and follow instructions based around the sport. Bringing in these sports has created a really positive atmosphere around PE and the students can't wait for their lessons.

As we have returned from half term and the weather is looking brighter, we have re-introduced the infamous lunchtime Sports Clubs! So far each day we have averaged 10 students per day at Sports Club including a whopping 15 students out at Football Club on Tuesday.

THRIVE & SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council Update

The School Council will soon be launching a student survey to find out what pupils would like to see improved next term—both around school and in their learning. As always, our meetings will be filled with plenty of laughter and, of course, biscuits.

House Points

A huge well done to Bravery, who won the house points last term. To celebrate, the team enjoyed a movie afternoon complete with snacks and Domino's pizza. The students had a fantastic time watching Chicken Little—a well-deserved treat for all their hard work. Congratulations again to Bravery, and we can't wait to see which house comes out on top this half term.



Interventions & Thrive Sessions

We are excited to share news about our new intervention and Thrive spaces in the recently completed building. We look forward to children enjoying high-quality sessions in these rooms and continuing to develop their Thrive strands in a calm, supportive environment.

Homework

Here are some home learning ideas to enhance your child's learning in school. If you do choose to complete any activities, please upload them to class dojo!

Maple class

Cut sponge or foam into simple footprint shapes and dip them into child-safe paint. Help your child press them onto paper or gently step onto the paper themselves to create an "animal trail." This supports sensory exploration and motor skills.

Create a simple tray using natural textures such as grass, leaves, sand, stones or water. Add a few toy animals and let your child explore the space. You can hide the animals, move them around together or talk about where each one might live.

Create simple "animals" using cardboard boxes by cutting a mouth shape into each one. Give your child sensory items like pasta, cereal, pom-poms or leaves to "feed" the animals.

Play animal noises from a toy or device and encourage your child to move like that animal. You could flap like a bird, hop like a frog or stomp like an elephant. Adding scarves, ribbons or textured mats makes it even more fun and sensory.

Fill a bowl or tray with water and add toy animals such as ducks, turtles or fish. Offer spoons, cups or nets to scoop and splash. Your child can explore floating, sinking and how the animals move through the water.

Stick different textures onto a piece of card - something fluffy for fur, smooth foil for scales, soft fabric for feathers, and bumpy material for shells. Let your child feel each texture and match it to animal pictures or toys if they want to.



Ash class

Hide animal toys around a room or garden.

Give your child simple written or picture clues to find each one – such as “This animal is hiding somewhere cold” or “Look under something green.”

Choose an animal and help your child create a small “fact card” including:

- what it eats
- where it lives
- a danger it faces
- one interesting fact

Using boxes, tubes, sticks, Lego or natural materials, ask your child to build a shelter for a chosen animal. Talk about what the animal needs – shade, warmth, water, hiding places – and let them adjust their shelter based on your questions.

Collect simple materials such as foil, paper, string, fabric, bubble wrap, etc. Choose an animal and ask your child to design an adaptation:

- “What could help the penguin stay warm?”
- “What would help the cheetah run fast?”

Choose a few animals and measure out their lengths using string, ribbon or tape – e.g, snake = 1m, fox = 70 cm, frog = 10 cm. Ask your child to compare them: “Which is longest?” “Which is shortest?”

Lay out picture cards or toys. Ask your child to sort animals into: farm, ocean, rainforest, desert, woodland, etc. Then add a reasoning challenge: “Tell me why the camel belongs in the desert.”



Oak class

Invite your child to create a simple “animal exhibition” at home. They can choose 3-5 animals and make:

- a labelled picture or model a
- short spoken explanation one
- interesting fact for each

Choose an environment (jungle, desert, ocean, arctic). Ask your child to think about what an animal would need to survive there: food, water, shelter, temperature, safety. They can draw, write or talk through their ideas.

Use small items at home (string, Lego, pictures, toy animals) to make simple food chains. For example: grass → rabbit → fox.

Ask your child to become a “news reporter.” They choose an animal and create a short news report such as: “The elephants are migrating today because...”

Provide craft materials such as foil, paper, string, card, fabric, pipe cleaners. Ask your child to invent a new adaptation for an animal: • “What could help the polar bear stay warm?”

Take a short walk in a garden, park or outdoor area. Ask your child to look for signs of animals: tracks, feathers, insects, birds, tunnels, webs.

Willow class

Invite your child to create a simple "animal exhibition" at home.

They can choose 3-5 animals and make:

- a labelled picture or model a
- short spoken explanation one
- interesting fact for each

Choose an environment (jungle, desert, ocean, arctic).

Ask your child to think about what an animal would need to survive there:

food, water, shelter, temperature, safety.

They can draw, write or talk through their ideas.

Use small items at home (string, Lego, pictures, toy animals) to make simple food chains.

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Ask your child to invent a new adaptation for an animal:

- "What could help the polar bear stay warm?"

Take a short walk in a garden, park or outdoor area.

Ask your child to look for signs of animals: tracks, feathers, insects, birds, tunnels, webs.

Beech class

Create a simple indoor or outdoor course using cushions, boxes, chalk or tape.

Ask your child to move like different animals around the course - "crawl under like a snake," "jump across like a frog," "balance like a flamingo."

Place animal figures or cards around the room.

Give sorting rules such as:

- "Find all the animals that live in water,"
- "Find the animals with four legs,"
- Your child races to collect and sort them into bowls, baskets, or boxes.

Set up a "café" for animals using bowls, cups, spoons and pretend or real food (e.g., cereal, dry pasta, leaves, fruit slices).

Tell your child what each animal eats and let them serve the right food - "The rabbit needs plants," "The lion needs meat," "The fish needs tiny food flakes."

Draw a simple zoo layout on a large sheet of paper or cardboard.

Add paths, fences, water areas, grass, and signs.

Your child can place toy animals (or cut-outs) in the correct enclosure and talk about why each one lives there.

Use a torch and animal figures to create shadows on the wall.

Ask your child to guess the animal, copy its movement, or match it to a picture.

You can experiment with light-moving it closer or further away to make the animals "grow" and "shrink."

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Woodend Farm School Term and Holiday Dates - Academic Year 2025-2026

September 2025							October 2025							November 2025							December 2025							
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29	30																											
January 2026							February 2026							March 2026							April 2026							
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May 2026							June 2026							July 2026							August 2026							
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- = Schooldays
- = School holidays
- = Bank holidays
- = Weekends
- = Non pupil day

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated,
or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Autumn Term:	Monday 1 September 2025 – Friday 19 December 2025	75 days
	<i>Half Term 27 October – 31 October</i>	
Spring Term:	Monday 5 January 2026 – Friday 27 March 2026	55 days
	<i>Half Term 16 February - 20 February</i>	
Summer Term:	Monday 13 April 2026 – Monday 20 July 2026	65 days
	<i>Half Term 25 May – 29 May, and May Bank Holiday - 4 May</i>	195 days