

Newsletter

Term 1 - 2023



Welcome to our term 1 newsletter. We have such a busy year ahead of us with lots of learning, trips, life skills and new experiences to explore. We have also changed the names of our classes as the school expands. The new class names are Mercury, Mars, Neptune, Saturn and Jupiter. Here is what we have been up to.

Whole School

• Literacy

Literacy is essential in life; from a young age it helps us develop and communicate and this term at Life Skills everyone has really embraced reading. We have our fully stocked, high interest, library alongside the reading areas in the classrooms. All the students have taken a Star Reader Assessment which has generated a reading age using the Accelerated Reader Programme (a programme to help monitor children's independent reading practice). The test determines their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), their optimal reading range to stop them becoming bored or frustrated with the book.



All the children have then picked a book that they are interested in, and they have had time every day to read it at school in their dedicated Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time. They have also been taking it in turns to read to an adult who will ask questions to support their comprehension. The children have also been able to take their books and reading records home with them so that they continue the book at home, and you can listen to reading and fill in their record books.

Mercury

Mercury class have had an excellent start to the academic year and all students have settled in well. The students have been getting into the rhythm of learning and have started to look at a range of things from information texts on climate change in their English, using their knowledge in Maths and exploring all about space and creating many different projects such as 3D models and systems.



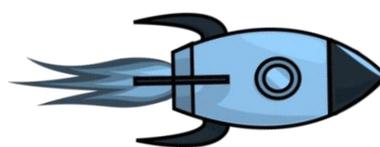
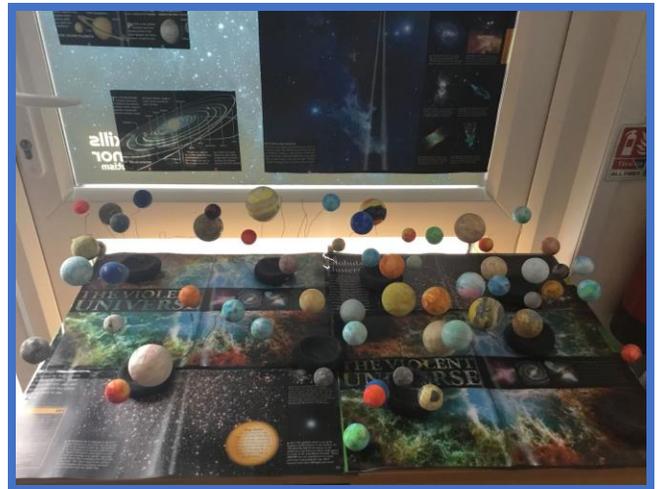


We have had the chance to go out in the community, exploring parks and nature reserves, polishing up on our golf skills, visiting prospective pet rabbits and learning more about local campsites and outdoor living. We put our pedals to the floor as our cycling skills accelerated through the term and we look forward to our first ride out to Pegwell Bay! The students have produced some beautiful work in class too, from information texts on climate change in their English studies, to learning all about space and creating their very own mini solar systems. The continuous opportunities to hone our life skills have not gone amiss, as Thrive, Lego Therapy, sensory circuits, cooking, gardening, model making and horse riding sessions, for some of the students, have all been incorporated into daily class life.

We have been out into the community and have been putting our skills to the test with cafe experiences, library visits, shopping interventions and visiting local parks. The students have enjoyed all sessions and are excited to see what term 2 brings.

Mars

As the first half term draws to a close, we've enjoyed reminiscing about all the amazing things we have done over the last couple of months. Mars class have worked hard across a huge array of lessons and interventions and have taken hold of all the experiences that have come our way.



Neptune



Neptune have started the year with a bang! Though many of the class were together last year they have welcomed new members and are gelling well as a group. As a whole class of lively, sporty students we have had opportunities throughout the term to be getting involved in activities both in and out of school. Activities this term have been focused on football and have included inviting a local SEN school to a competitive match here at Baypoint, Inclusive Sports event (hosted at Margate football stadium) and FA trained coaches running sessions for the group.



Animals are a big part of the classroom in Neptune, we have a class tortoise and class stick insects and as well as our classroom pets we spend time getting to know all our school animals and as you can see from the photos, our ducks have become a fond class favourite.



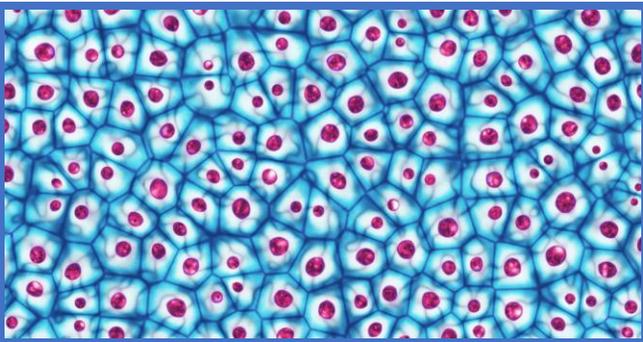
Saturn

Term 1 has been a positive and refreshing start to a new academic year, in Saturn Class.

They have successfully completed their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, with Nolan and participated in trips to develop communication skills, such as, visiting the library, ordering food and drink at a local cafe, spending an afternoon at Wildwood Trust and a short visit to Betteshanger.



Academically, Saturn class has been studying plant and animal cells, in science, fact/opinion and dictionary skills in English, and using numbers and number systems, in maths.



Jupiter

It's that time again when we put the allotment to bed, well not quite anyway! There are still plenty of jobs to do around the allotment.

One example of this was Jupiter classes fantastic effort in cleaning and preparing the soil ready to sow garlic. We have decided to sow three types of garlic this year to see which will produce the best yield. We have sown garlic bulbs from last year's produce, organic supermarket garlic and elephant garlic. The garlic will grow and harden over winter allowing the bulbs to separate and swell ready for pulling up around June time when the leaves turn yellow. We are hoping that there will be no rust this year.



Jayden, Connor, Bailee, Brad and James have also been busy down in the outdoor learning area, creating our new outdoors work benches. We are looking forward to many independent design projects such as making our own bug houses and bird boxes. We use a wide range of skills to create our benches including measuring, cutting and joining skills. Thank you to Roe Stairs for the donation of wood for our bench legs.

Therapy



We are pleased to announce our new therapy house has provided a fantastic therapeutic environment to facilitate a range of therapy and intervention offers inclusive of Thrive sessions, music and reading doctor lessons and the physiotherapy clinic. Next half term, pupils in Jupiter class will have the opportunity to utilise the independent living areas by participating in 'fun and healthy food' therapy sessions.



Pupils have also been working hard with Laurance to start developing our therapy garden - lots of digging in progress and the creation of environments to welcome our lovely addition of 4 ducks and a rabbit to the team!



The therapy and pastoral team have welcomed the introduction of the Thrive approach to Life Skills Manor School this half term. Pupils have been engaging in therapeutic activities during the introduction of whole class sessions and staff have been introduced to Thrive through whole school training. Parents and carers who attended the Macmillian coffee morning have also gained an insight into the approach. The 'Thrive' room has evolved over the half term, with pupils contributing to designing displays and choosing toys/resources. If you would like to find out more, please check out the Thrive link on our website or contact Holly (Clinical Lead)/ Kim (pastoral lead).

Thank you to parents and carers for your feedback regarding the therapy questionnaire sent out via class dojo during the term. We will be posting the results and actions next half term, which will include an offer of parent/carer support and educational sessions through Changing Minds Kent.

Horse riding Intervention at Daffodil Paddock

This term a group of three students have been attending Daffodil paddock at Quex park every Friday afternoon for a horse riding intervention. The students have learnt how to groom and tack up a horse as well as riding a variety of environments. They have ridden in the riding school and learnt turns and crossing techniques and been on hacks through woods and fields.



As well as being great fun time spent with horses has amazing therapeutic benefits such as improving confidence, reducing stress and anxiety, developing fine and gross motor skills, identifying and expressing emotions and improving physical health.

The students had a great time and have been a credit to the school while offsite. We hope the new group starting next term enjoys it just as much.



THE GAMES MASTER

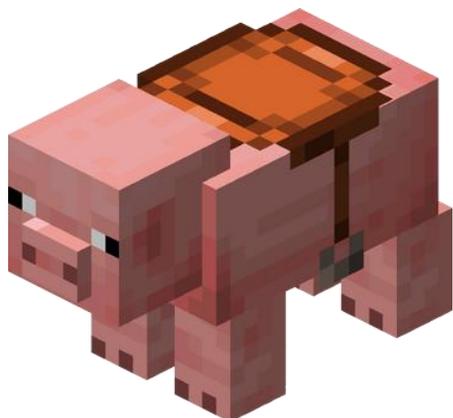
Games review by Thomas Sullivan

Welcome to my first school newsletter games review. I will be reviewing Minecraft.

This is based on the survival world mode.



Within this game the player will create a world where you start with nothing. The idea of the game is to build a world from all the resources around you. I would start the game by finding the nearest tree and breaking it using 'RT' or right trigger. From this you will gain a log. You can then craft logs into planks which can then be made into a crafting table. From this you can build a house, castle, hovering base, dig mines farm crops and animals. These resources will help to keep you 'Steve' healthy especially when you get attacked at night by spiders, creepers, skeletons or zombies. This game can be multiplayer so that you can interact with your friends online.



You can add cheat mode or 'creative mode' which will allow you to get access to everything such as diamonds, food, ingredients, flowers and seeds. This can be found in the create a new world menu, then select the option 'creative mode'.

Graphics	Engagement	Sound/ Music	Skill Level	Overall
5/10	8/10	5/10	3/10	10/10

School uniform

Blue coat or zipped fleece with school logo
Blue sweatshirt with school logo
Black school shoes
Black or dark grey school trousers
Black or dark grey appropriate length shirt
White cotton shirt or white school logo polo shirt

Sometimes there are sensory related issues with clothing therefore in consultation with parents/ carers other items can be accepted such as,

Dark trainers with dark logo
Dark joggers
Plain white T-shirt
Plain dark jumper

Not acceptable

Wearing a cap, coloured trainers, jeans, hoodie, coloured joggers, coloured t-shirt, coloured jumper and coloured polos.

PE KIT

White school logo T-shirt
Dark Shorts or Joggers
Trainers

Enjoy the break and see you back in **term 2**

