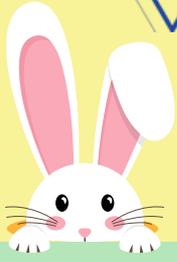




Hillside Specialist School & College

Providing exceptional education for all students



EASTER NEWSLETTER 2026



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Friday 27th March
LAST DAY OF TERM
- Monday 13th April
SCHOOL REOPENS
- Monday 4th May - May Day Closure
- Friday 22nd May
LAST DAY OF TERM



Arbor

Please make sure you download the Arbor app as this is where we send important messages and you can see pupil information

THANK YOU

TO THE MURPHY GROUP FOR KINDLY DONATING 30 LAPTOPS. THESE WILL BENEFIT OUR PUPILS ENORMOUSLY

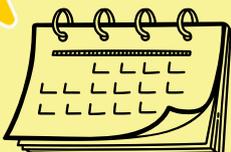


MURPHY

WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

Congratulations!

To Kaci for completing your NVQ Level 3 for Teaching Assistant - Well done!



STAFF NEWS

We are pleased to welcome to the team:

Maisie Wignall - Apprentice



REMINDER:

SCHOOL REOPENS ON TUESDAY 13th APRIL



Attendance

Our attendance target is 96%. Our Whole school is attendance 91.5%

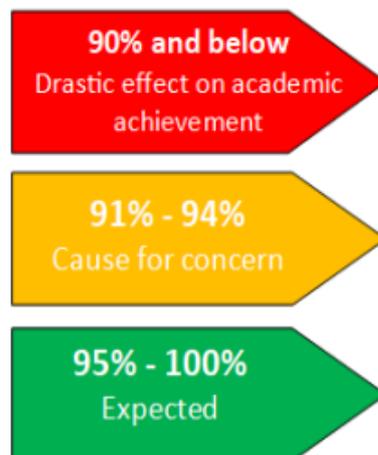
Thank you for your continued support in helping your children arrive at school every day

What is persistent absence?

If your child takes too much time off school they will become categorised as PA or persistently absent. (Attendance below 90% = persistent absence). Missing school will make your child fall behind in lessons and will impact on their academic progress and achievement. Don't allow your child to become a PA student.

Safeguarding Reminder

If parents or carers do not make contact with the school to explain a child's absence, we may carry out a Safe and Well check as part of our safeguarding procedures. This may involve contacting you directly, contacting other named contacts that you have shared with us or visiting the family home.



***Every Child Matters.
Every Moment Counts.***



Visit your Pharmacy First

Most Pharmacies can help you with seven common conditions without needing a GP appointment:

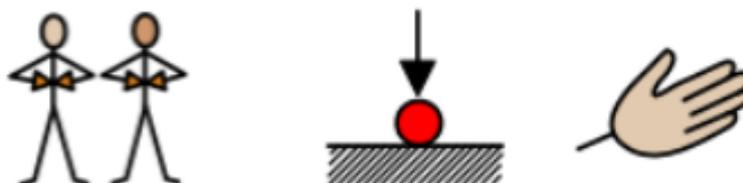
- **Earache**—children and young adults aged 1 year to 17 years.
- **Impetigo**— 1 year and above.
- **Infected Insect bites** - 1 years and over.
- **Shingles** - 18 years and over.
- **Sinusitis**— 12 years and over.
- **Sore Throat**—5 years and over.
- **Urinary Tract Infections**—women aged 16-64 years.

If you need medical advice, please first consult your Pharmacy and then your GP, 111, or Urgent Care as a last resort.



Attendance

Our Shared Goal - We aim for every child to attend school every day if they are well enough to do so. Good attendance supports academic progress, social development and emotional wellbeing. Thank you for working with us to give your child the best possible start.



We are here to help. If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's attendance, please contact either your child's class teacher or speak to Emma Pettitt. We are here to help and support you. Open communication enables us to work together to improve your child's attendance. By sharing any challenges early, we can offer guidance, put appropriate support in place, and ensure your child has the best possible chance to succeed. Thank you for working with us to support your child.

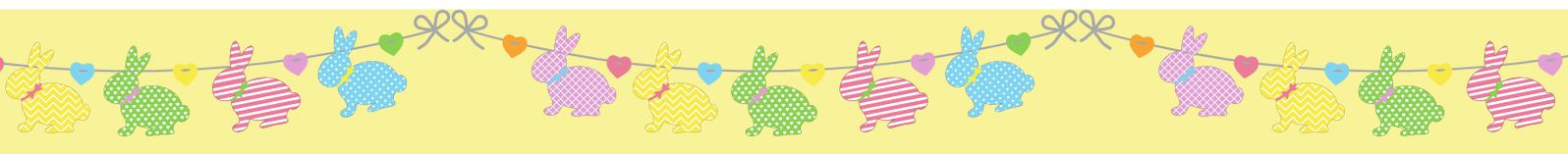
Summer Term 2026

Re-open on	Monday 13 April 2026
May Day Closure	Monday 4 May 2026
Mid Term Closure	Monday 25 May - Friday 29 May 2026 (inclusive)
Re-open on	Monday 1 June 2026
Closure after school on	Thursday 16 July 2026
INSET	Friday 17 July 2026
INSET	Monday 20 July 2026

SCHOOL NEWS



World Book Day Fun!





GOOSNARGH & LONGRIDGE AGRICULTURAL SHOW

JUNIOR ARTS & CRAFT COMPETITION 2026

SATURDAY 11TH JULY 2026

Get Creative at Home!

Our school has been invited to take part in this exciting local event! We would love as many children as possible to get involved and showcase their creativity. For families who enjoy getting creative together, children are very welcome to complete an entry at home.

Entry fee: 20p per entry
Prizes available!

Important Information

- If your child plans to create an entry at home, please inform the school by Friday 17th April 2026
- Parents will be updated in due course with details of when entries need to be submitted

Competition Categories:

Choose one or more:

- Book cover about plants (A4)
- Photograph – "Wild Weather" (A5 print)
- Painting of a tractor (A4)
- Design a new postage stamp (A5)
- Soapbox derby car (recycled materials, max 30cm x 30cm)
- Decorated glass jar (jam jar size)
- Painted pebble (max 15cm)
- 100th birthday card for Sir David Attenborough (A5)

Why take part?

- Be part of a local community event
- Celebrate creativity
- Win prizes!
- Have fun creating together at home

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL

This half term in Willow our topic has been Natural Disasters, and the children have been thoroughly engaged in learning about the powerful events that shape our world. Through stories, experiments, creative work and physical activity, they have explored volcanoes, earthquakes, tornadoes and flooding while developing a wide range of skills across the curriculum.

In English, we have followed the exciting story 'Milo's Adventure', travelling alongside Milo as he experiences different natural disasters including a volcano eruption, an earthquake, a tornado and flooding. The children really enjoyed discussing how Milo might have felt and predicting what might happen next in the story.

We also explored the poem 'Vicky the Volcano', where the children listened carefully to the rhythm and language of the poem while thinking about how volcanoes erupt

Throughout these texts, the children have been developing their story writing skills, practising sentence structure, and building confidence in spelling CVC words. They have also been working hard to identify and read tricky words, supporting their growing reading and writing abilities.

In Maths, we have been exploring the topic of money. The children began by recapping their knowledge of different coins, identifying them by their size, colour and value. They then practised combining coins to make a given amount, developing their understanding of number and value.

To make our learning practical and fun, we have enjoyed shopping trips, role-play activities and tuck shop visits. The children have loved taking turns as customers and shopkeepers, counting coins, choosing items and paying the correct amounts.

Our topic learning continued through Art and DT. In Design Technology, the children investigated building structures that could withstand earthquakes. They worked like real engineers - predicting, testing and recording results.

A particular highlight was testing their structures on our replica earthquake board, where they could observe what happened when the 'ground' shook. The children carefully watched the results and then modified and adapted their designs to make them stronger and more stable.

In Art, we focused on volcanoes and created our own versions inspired by Nick Rowland's volcanic artwork. The children explored a range of exciting painting techniques including dabbing, scraping, splattering and using forks to create texture and dramatic erupting lava effects. The results were fantastic and full of creativity.

In PE, the children have been thoroughly enjoying their swimming lessons. They have been working hard on their individual targets, building confidence in the water, improving their swimming technique and developing important water safety skills. Alongside swimming, the children have also been taking part in sensory circuits and obstacle courses, which help develop coordination, balance and strength while ensuring everyone stays active and has lots of fun.

It has been a fantastic half term full of curiosity, creativity and hands-on learning. The children have shown great enthusiasm and we are very proud of all their hard work.



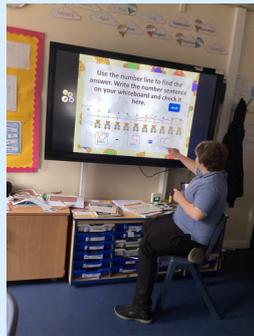
Spring 2 complete! Walnut Class have had a great Spring term. This half term we have had a big focus on ASDAN with a big push on learning skills in the water, learning about personal hygiene and keeping fit and healthy. We have made our own smoothies as part of healthy eating. Pupils had a tasting session of all the different smoothies made and were able to say which ones they liked or didn't like.

Our English story was based on world war II and was called 'The Lion and the Unicorn'. We pretended to be evacuees and packed up a suitcase. We wrote sentences that included capital letters and full stops. The class have been working hard on understanding when to use capital letters in sentences. Our communication sessions are based on emotions and supporting pupils to understand that emotions other than happy are ok

Maths has focused on number including addition and subtraction. We have made use of our number skills to understand change when purchasing items. Pupils have had the opportunity to spend money in a variety of settings, able to say the cost, find the correct money and then wait for change.

We have been learning new Spanish words including colours, numbers, fruit and vegetables and the names of clothes. We went on to pack a suitcase with the clothes, number the cases and then use our words to colour them in.

We hope everyone has a lovely holiday and we look forward to some exciting things in the Summer term.



CLASS NEWS



Alder Class have had a very busy and exciting half term exploring and learning all about minibeasts!

We enjoyed reading 'What the Ladybird Heard' and listening to poems from 'Mad About Minibeasts', where we learned lots of new vocabulary, did some role play and practised Makaton signs linked to our topic.

In Maths, we explored weight by weighing different minibeasts, as well as finding, counting, and sorting number bugs. In Computing, we investigated data by looking at which minibeasts were the most and least popular.

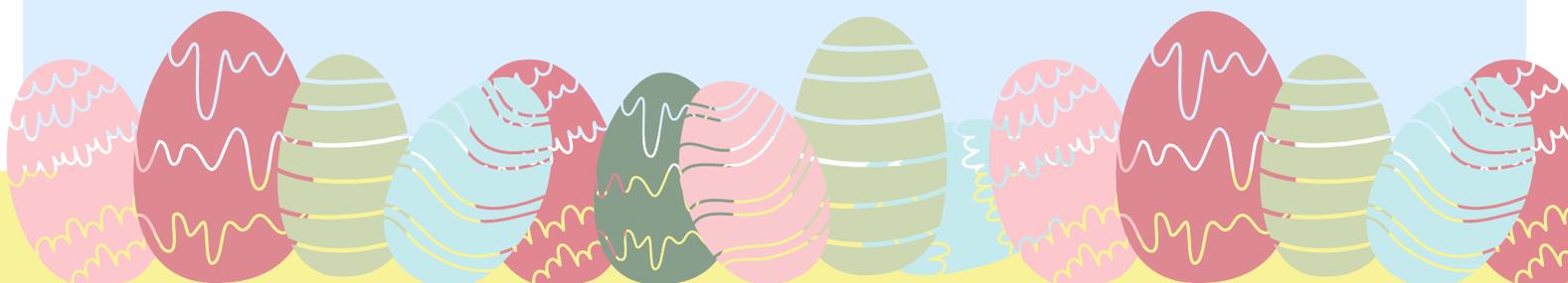
During PSHE, we focused on recognising and expressing our emotions in different ways. We also spent lots of time outdoors in Forest School, exploring habitats, studying bugs we found, and even making our own bug hotels.

In PE, we used the low ropes course and moved like insects, practising a wide range of physical skills.

Our Year 6 pupils have been visiting the local community to prepare for their move to secondary school next year, practising lots of important life skills along the way. We also enjoyed a range of Easter tuff trays, celebrated the arrival of Spring, tried our hand at cooking cakes, and finished the term with a fun Easter party full of treats!

Take a look at some of the wonderful things we've been up to this term.

We wish you all a very hoppy Easter!





We have had a very busy and exciting time in Spruce Class and the children have been enjoying lots of different learning experiences across the curriculum.

Maths

In Maths we have been learning about heavy and light. The children explored what these words mean and practised identifying which items are heavy and which are light. We used balance scales to compare objects and see which ones weighed more. The children also ordered items from lightest to heaviest. They enjoyed using cubes to predict and test how many cubes it would take to balance different objects.

English

In English we have been reading the book 'Superhero Like You'. The children identified the title, author and illustrator and we focused on the main character, Lily. We talked about her description and the different jobs she explored in the story, helping the children to understand the important roles people play in helping others.

PSHE

In PSHE we have been learning all about People Who Help Us. We have been very lucky to have several visitors, including the foodbank team, the fire service and guide dogs. The children also enjoyed posting letters home and pretending to be postal workers. We talked about the people who help us in school too, and Darren and Dan came to visit. The children shared their ideas about how they help us around school.

PE

In PE the children have been enjoying Outdoor Learning with Anna and PE sessions with Roxy on Fridays. They have also had a fantastic time with our external provider Super Ball Paul, taking part in fun and active games.

RE

In RE we have been learning about the Sikh festival Vaisakhi. The children made colourful flags and kites and explored the sounds of drums as part of learning about how this festival is celebrated.

We are very proud of all the children and how enthusiastic they have been in their learning!





Oak Class

An even shorter half term, but nonetheless jam packed full of wonderful activities and progress!

With the exam season soon upon us, we've been focusing in on our revision for both maths and English. Pupils will be sitting a range of different level Functional Skills exams on different dates – these have been sent home for parents.

For PDP we've been finishing off some modules including our upcycling project with Julie, designing health and safety posters for a display in the college kitchen and planning a fictional birthday event with a £200 budget. Our weekly enterprise sessions have continued with our breakfast sandwiches going down a hit – we've also got plans for an Easter themed special in the last week of term.

Unfortunately, our weekly swimming sessions have come to an end, but everyone had lots of fun in the pool, engaging with peers and building up their swimming skills. Oak class loved getting stuck in with careers week, experiencing a range of activities including a guest speaker into school from the BBC!

Have a lovely and restful Easter break,

James and the Oak Class team.



CLASS NEWS



This half term Cedar class have enjoyed playing instruments to music, listening to different types of music and describing it using symbols and practising copying a rhythm. Our science was based on sound. We have felt vibrations through tuning forks and learnt how we hear sounds.

In PE we have been practising sitting in a circle as part of a group and rolling a ball to one another as well as hitting a stationary ball with a bat, moving onto hitting a ball which has been bowled towards them.

Our English was based on the story 'In the Swamp in the Light of the Moon' and featured different instruments. We practised identifying pictures and words connected to the story.

In maths our focus has been position and direction. We practised identifying different prepositions and then moved onto identifying the direction an object has moved e.g. left and right, up and down.

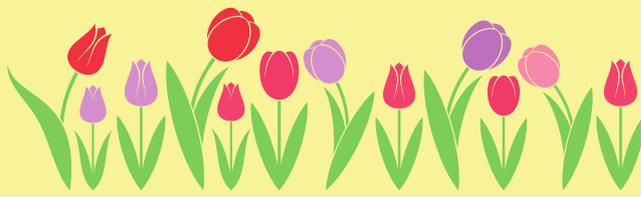
We have done many different activities in ASDAN including growing sunflower plants from seed.



Have a great Easter holiday!



CLASS NEWS



Another fun half term in Pine class! This half term we have been practising key words during English sessions, exploring sound and vibration in Science, continuing to focus on Sensory and Physical Wellbeing as part of our ASDAN accreditation and we have also been learning about money as one of our Maths topics. Pupils have had the chance to visit the school tuck shop as well as a trip to a local supermarket. We also enjoyed celebrating World Book Day.

All pupils in Pine class have continued to make great progress towards individual learning, sensory, independence and communication targets.

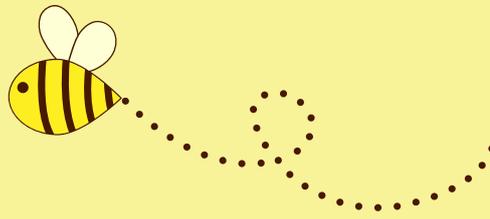
We hope everyone has a lovely Easter!



This term in Bay Class has been full of adventure, creativity and discovery! We've sailed across the seas with the story of Noah's Ark, sparking our imaginations and helping us explore a whole range of feelings. Inspired by this, we became storytellers ourselves - creating everything from The Bay Class Ark to dramatic volcanic eruptions and even our very own game worlds! In PSHE, we've been learning all about our emotions and how to manage them, linking our ideas to how Noah might have felt on his journey. In maths, we've been mastering division using practical resources and written numbers - we are getting really confident! Our science lessons have been hands-on and exciting as we explored electrical items by making milkshakes, toast and even doing a bit of cleaning with the Hoover. We've loved our weekly Forest School sessions with Julie, where we've explored nature, learned how to care for the environment and, of course, had lots of fun getting muddy! To top it all off, we've created our very own class volcano... and it's ready to erupt!

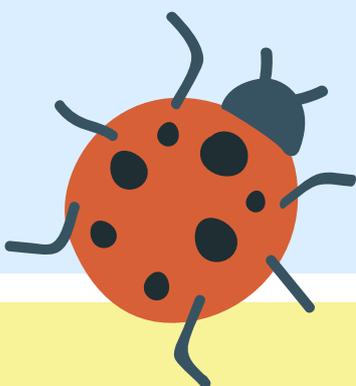


CLASS NEWS



This half term in Cherry Class we have been on a journey back in time to World War II, exploring history through hands-on activities that definitely kept us on our toes (and sometimes covered us in flour, paper or mystery artefact dust!). Alongside this, we've been learning about time, through practical, hands-on activities, with clocks, sequencing and plenty of teamwork. Everyone has shown fantastic effort and engagement. Through our ASDAN course, we became roving reporters and library helpers in the Longridge community, interviewing librarians, stamping books like seasoned professionals, checking returns and restocking shelves with impressive precision. We also enjoyed outings to Longridge Park and the Old Station Café, where every student proudly ordered independently and paid with their own money. Socialising, playing, exploring and learning together, it's been wonderful to see!

In Science, we became geologists, investigating rocks with great enthusiasm and occasionally deciding which ones looked most like dinosaur eggs. In PE, we've been mastering team games such as dodgeball, showing brilliant teamwork, communication and truly impressive dodging skills! Our final week has been a real highlight. Monday's WW2 History Day transformed Cherry Class into a sensory adventure, filled with army vehicles, air-raid shelters and even a "train ride" evacuation to the countryside before we finished with a fabulous 1940s-themed party that had everyone smiling. It's been a joyful, hardworking and memorable half term. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish you all a restful, happy and chocolate-filled Easter holiday!



CLASS NEWS



Highlights from a Busy and Bright Half Term in Maple Class!

What a whirlwind of a half term it has been! From exploring our well-being to giving back to the community, our pupils have been incredibly busy growing, learning and creating.

Here is a look at what we've been up to:

Mind, Body and Soul: Healthy Lifestyles

This term, our primary focus was on Healthy Lifestyles. We dove deep into what it means to be "well," covering three main pillars:

- * **Healthy Eating:** Discovering how to fuel our bodies with the right nutrients.
- * **Healthy Living:** Staying active and understanding the importance of physical movement.
- * **Healthy Emotions:** Learning how to identify our feelings and find positive ways to manage them.

To support this, our Yoga Relaxation sessions have been a massive success. We are so proud to report that the pupils are now staying focused and engaged for the full 30-minute session, a wonderful milestone for their mindfulness journey!

Out and About in the Community

We believe learning happens everywhere, not just in the classroom! This half term, we enjoyed several fantastic community visits:

- * **The Library:** We celebrated World Book Day by exploring the local library and diving into new stories.
- * **OJ's Charity:** A meaningful visit where pupils practiced their shopping skills and supported the local community.
- * **Aldi:** A practical trip to practice our life skills and healthy food choices in the real world.

Creativity and Science in Action

In the classroom, our hands have been very busy! Our aspiring musicians have been working with Ben from the Lancashire Music Hub. Together, they explored a variety of accessible instruments and even began composing their own original music.

In our Science topic, things got a bit explosive as we built and set off our very own volcano! On a gentler note, we finally finished our class dolls' house. It looks beautiful and we are so excited to donate it to the school so the younger pupils can enjoy it for years to come.

Looking Toward the Future

Finally, it's a time of big steps and new beginnings. A few of our pupils have officially started their transitions to their next placements. These visits have been incredibly positive and while we will miss them, we are so proud of the confidence they are showing as they prepare for their next chapters



CLASS NEWS



We have had a super half term in Saplings. The children have loved learning about people who help us. They began learning about the people in school who help us and even had visits from Nicola & Sheila the school cooks and Dan & Darren our site supervisors. The children enjoyed exploring their equipment and hearing all about their day to day roles. As the term progressed, the children learnt about fire fighters and even met a fire lady from the local fire station. They then learnt about doctors and nurses and enjoyed bandaging each other up. They met a guide dog and learnt how he helps people who are blind and have difficulties with their vision. To finish the term, the children learnt about police officers and even carried out their own investigation for a missing shoe! It was lots of fun.

In maths, the children explored numbers to 10 and made groups of different amounts. They also explored some 3d shapes to find out if they could roll and build with them before trying some foods which were shaped like different 3d shapes including cubes, cuboids and cylinders.

The children continued their work on gymnastics in PE and have all learnt how to do a number of different rolls including forward rolls and teddy bear rolls. They were also really brave and practised balancing on the beams and jumping from the equipment.

We have also been working really hard on our communication skills, using picture symbols and our communication books to make requests for toys, activities and foods. We are so proud of all of them!



CLASS NEWS



This Spring half term, Birch Class have been busy exploring the exciting topic of minibeasts. We have enjoyed reading a range of engaging stories and poems, including ‘There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly’, ‘The Hungry Caterpillar’, and ‘Bugs! Bugs! Bugs!’, using these to support our work in reading comprehension, communication, writing and fine motor skills. In Maths, we have been focusing on number, linking our learning to minibeasts as well as exploring money. Our Science learning has included planting and growing cress seeds, categorising plants, leaves and trees, and understanding the plant life cycle. In DT and Science, we have made bug houses while also exploring different minibeast habitats and observing what we can find in our environment. In PSHE, we have been learning about emotions, helping us to better understand ourselves and others. During PE, we have been developing our ball skills through “Superball Paul,” and we have also taken part in weekly communication sessions in the hall where we practice turn-taking, sharing and communicating with our peers. Have a lovely Easter holiday!



CLASS NEWS



A fun filled half term in Chestnut class with lots of exciting activities learning about people who help us.

We have been on an adventure with the Jolly Postman and had lots of fun exploring characters and letters from the story as well as making some of our own deliveries ready for our very own Jolly Postman party!

Throughout our topic lessons, we have learned more about Doctors, Nurses, Dentists and Police Officers. We have had lots of fun helping our teddy get better with lots of cuddles and regular check-ups, whilst we have learned more about our own bodies and parts of our bodies in Science. We have explored our teeth and how to keep them clean before helping Police Officer Tumble find the lost property whilst exploring buildings in the local community as part of Geography.

The children and staff have enjoyed exploring number through lots of multi-sensory activities, growing in confidence to count and sequence numbers, share out groups of items and start to learn about place value. We have also enjoyed learning about light and heavy in our weight unit exploring different objects and materials that are heavy or light. We look forward to lots more learning next half term, focusing on Spring and things that grow as our theme.

But in the meantime, on behalf of the Chestnut Class team I would like to wish you all a lovely Easter break.

Fiona and the Chestnut Class team



CLASS NEWS



Although this half term has been short, we have managed to include in it such a lot of activities and recorded lots of achievements from the pupils.

It's great to see pupils making progress with their accreditation and accessing so many activities both in school and also out in the community.

I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and also to highlight to you our fundraising activities for next term - we want all to get involved.

Thank you for your continued support.



Enjoy the Easter period.

Paul Leaper - Headteacher.



School will reopen on Monday 13th April





Dates for the Diary

2026 EVENTS

Saturday 27th June
Summer Fair

Friday 13th November



Saturday 12th December
Christmas Fair

We really appreciate all the support!



 **support our school**
join our lottery!
Sign up today at www.YourSchoolLottery.co.uk/play

For every ticket sold 76% goes towards school and prizes. If you would like to take part please go to <https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/> to join. £1 per ticket!

FUNDRAISING NEWS



tcs MINI LONDON MARATHON

THE BIG WALK AT HILLSIDE

TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE RESTORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR OUTDOOR AREAS

THE MINI LONDON MARATHON CHALLENGE IS RUNNING FROM
13TH APRIL TO 1ST MAY

- ★ Pupils and staff will be involved during the school day
- ★ Distances will be logged daily
- ★ A trophy for the winning pupil and staff member

Alongside our Big Walk, one of our teachers, Anna, will be taking part in the Great North Swim on Windemere Lake on the Saturday 13th June 2026 completing a 2 mile swim!

PLEASE SPONSOR OUR WALKERS AND OUR SWIMMER FOR A GREAT CAUSE.

If you would to donate please visit our just giving page

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our new fundraising initiative:
The Big Walk!

This exciting project aims to help us improve and enhance our outdoor areas and we can't wait to get everyone involved.

As part of this challenge, we'll be completing the 'Mini London Marathon in Schools' programme.

From 13th April to 1st May, we're inviting all pupils and staff to join in and see just how many miles we can achieve together as a school community.



We're also delighted to share that a Paralympian will be visiting our school to inspire pupils, boost confidence, and celebrate our achievements.

During the visit:

- They will lead a whole-school assembly
- We will proudly receive our Big Walk trophy
- Pupils will take part in a special exercise session led by our guest athlete



Alongside our Big Walk, one of our teachers, Anna, will be taking part in the Great North Swim on Windemere Lake on the Saturday 13th June 2026 completing a 2 mile swim!

Please share the just giving link below to friends and families

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hillside-specialist-school-college?utm_medium=CF&utm_source=CL