

Belmont School Newsletter

Belmont
A special school
Autumn Term



A message from the Headteacher

It's been a very long seven weeks for the class teams and I would first like to thank the Belmont team for all the hard work, and congratulate the children on some wonderful learning and great choices and behaviour. The school has felt so alive since we have broken free from Covid and it's been wonderful to have children mixing on the daily mile, joining together for assemblies and working and learning together as a community.

Can I next recognise the wonderful support and engagement from our families and carers: we have now linked with 100% of you for learning conversations, and this close partnership is integral to offering the best provision for our children, so thank you. The feedback forms have also been helping us in shaping the future. As Headteacher, I am delighted that families feel their children are safe and happy here, and very proud that 100% of you would recommend Belmont to others. The team and I have also carefully considered the areas for further improvement as we know we can do even better in the future. Thank you for your constructive feedback.

Safeguarding

Just a reminder that I am the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and I am supported by Mrs Carroll. We want to improve the quality and impact of our work each year, and I am delighted to tell you that from Term 2 we will be assisted by Amy Keen as our new family support worker. Mrs Keen will be supporting any families who experience tough times, and Mrs Carroll with our holiday respite work.

If families ever have concerns or need guidance around safeguarding please do call the school staff or Mrs Carroll. If there is ever an urgent concern, please call the Gloucestershire Children and Families Services Helpdesk on 01452 426565 or the Belmont safeguarding phone on 07957 629421.

This year our two priorities for safeguarding are online safety and a further focus on proactive work around sexual behaviours. The staff team has been training using resources from the NSPCC: these have been excellent and may be very helpful to secondary families in supporting older children in this important area:

How to Talk to Children About Sex & Safety | NSPCC | NSPCC

Linked to Safeguarding can I please thank our many drivers who bring our children safely to school every day. Attendance has been excellent—standing at an amazing 95.3% for Term 1—and our drivers are essential in supporting this. Just a reminder for all drivers that at all times our MAXIMUM speed limit on site is 5mph.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very restful and safe half term break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back on **Wednesday 2nd November**.

Kevin & Team Belmont



Parent Conversations

Parent Conversations – thank you for your 100% recommendation!

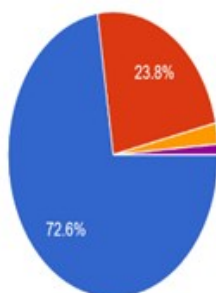
It was a pleasure to talk to so many of you at our recent parent conversation meetings. We are impressed to say that so far 98% of our parental conversation meetings have taken place. It was a great honour to talk about your children and share how well they have settled into the new school year. It is lovely to have you all taking such an active role within these conversations.

Thank you to everyone who came to engage with the stalls in the hall. I know many of you valued being able to speak with the intervention staff and find out more about the interventions that are on offer at Belmont. In the hall we also had some information about the importance of how to keep children safe online. If any of you would like more information on online safety, please contact your class tutor.

Thank you to everyone who completed the feedback questionnaires. It has been so rewarding to read such wonderful comments about how you feel your child is doing at school and how you value the commitment and skill set of the staff team at Belmont.

My child is happy in school

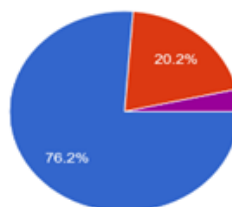
84 responses



● Strongly agree
● Agree
● Disagree
● Strongly disagree
● Don't know

My child feels safe at this school

84 responses

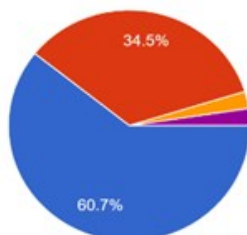


● Strongly agree
● Agree
● Disagree
● Strongly disagree
● Don't know

There are two themes which came up during the feedback for us to look at improving further. These are interventions communication and class dojo communication. I will outline some expectations for both of these below.

I feel I am kept well informed on how school is going for my child.

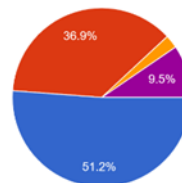
84 responses



● Strongly agree
● Agree
● Disagree
● Strongly disagree
● Don't know

I am aware of the interventions that the school has on offer and the interventions my child receives

84 responses



● Strongly agree
● Agree
● Disagree
● Strongly disagree
● Don't know



With regards to our interventions communication the expectation will be that the team member who is leading an intervention with your child will communicate with you via class dojo on the intervention and its aims. They will provide you with some updates along the way and a summary once the intervention has been completed. Your class tutor/ LP should also be able to share with you the interventions your child receives at any point.

With regards to class dojo communications, I feel it's important that I run through the dojo expectations with you. The expectations are that primary teams will share daily updates on what the children have been learning in school usually via the class story. There will be some more personal messages regarding your child's day at least once a week. With regards to secondary there should be two class updates per week via the school story and again one more personal message per week.

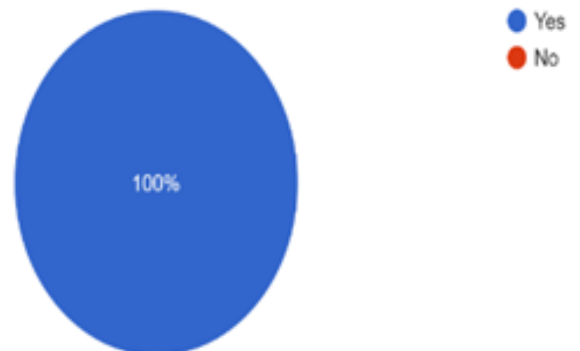
These posts can include photos so you can see what your child has been doing at school. Staff will aim to respond to all messages during the working school day. With class dojo there is no expectation that staff will respond to messages after 4.30pm or during the weekend. We do however appreciate that at times emergencies arise and we may need to be contacted outside of these times.

If you have any questions with regards to class dojo or interventions then please do get in touch.

We know that after school clubs and post 16 have been raised as things that could make Belmont even better. This year we hope to be able to offer an increased variety of after school clubs. Post 16 continues to be an ambition of the school, too.

Finally, we are really pleased to know that 100% of you would recommend Belmont. We would like to thank you for your continued help and support to ensure that your child is able to thrive.

Would you recommend this school to another parent?
82 responses



Introducing our new School Council

This term pupils have been preparing for our School Council elections. From class Dolphins all the way up to class Quails, pupils have been busy writing and presenting their School Council applications to their classes. The competition was tough, but we ensured that everyone had a fair chance by carrying out an official anonymous ballot within each class.

The votes were counted and our new School Council announced as Lily, Isabelle, James, Mkenzee, Rory, Frank, Kinny, Leland, Grace, Aiden, Jamine, Bobby, David and Sapphire.

They have a busy year ahead of them, helping to improve playtimes, organising events, meeting with members of the community and helping to keep our school environment a happy and healthy place.



News From F@B

Friends at Belmont are back for another fantastic year of fundraising and providing support to pupils, families and staff at Belmont School!

At the end of last year F@B presented all staff with a small gift as a token of our appreciation for all their hard work throughout the last academic year, on behalf of families and children at Belmont. We also enjoyed a family day out on the canal with the Willow Trust – thanks to Anne Wilson.



Our main project for this term is organising the Christmas Craft Fayre on Saturday 26th November 2pm-5pm!

Please do come along to grab yourself some gifts for Christmas whilst enjoying a mulled wine and mince pie. There will also be fun activities for the children and tombolas as well as the opportunity to meet Santa either in his Christmas grotto or during one of the reduced sensory environment sessions.

We also held a successful coffee morning in September, where we enjoyed a natter and some delicious free cake with some lovely families. We are hoping to hold more in the future – everyone is welcome! In addition to this we are looking forward to attending a transition event on the 21st October to learn more about different opportunities/services for our children post Belmont with parent/carers of senior school pupils.

We always LOVE to welcome new members to Friends at Belmont (F@B) or any fundraising suggestions/ideas for parent/carers get togethers.

If you would like to contact us please do email on thefabpta@gmail.com or find us on facebook on our public page Friends at Belmont – Warden Hill or private group F@B Belmont Families group.





FRIENDS AT BELMONT PRESENT

MEET SANTA
IN HIS GROTTO
AT OUR

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE

Come and find the perfect Christmas gift!

SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER
2PM- 5PM
BELMONT SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM GL51 3AT

Plus - mulled wine, mince pies, refreshments,
tombolas, fun activities for the children, storm
troopers, and a Christmas raffle!
Visit to Santa for £2 - includes gift and soft play

Mr Day's epic fundraising cycle ride – update!

A huge thank you to everyone who supported our headteacher's marathon cycle ride from Lands End to John O'Groats during the summer. Mr Day's epic 1,000 mile expedition raised an fantastic £2125 for the wonderful Pied Piper Appeal.

'I am so thrilled with this amount', he said. 'It's way more than I had ever hoped for, and I want to thank everyone, so much, for every penny they donated.'

Mr Day began supporting Pied Piper after his lovely daughter Amber, at just two years old, was admitted to Gloucester children's hospital with a serious chest infection and a collapsed lung. Thanks to the amazing staff, and resources paid for by Pied Piper, she made a full recovery.

'From there, our family made a commitment to always help Pied Piper in



its work to support the children's ward.' Mr Day explained. 'I was honoured two years ago when asked to support the charity as a Trustee and learn more about the absolutely amazing work it does.'

'It is wonderful to see how every penny helps local children with special needs, or who are seriously ill in hospital. Pied Piper has also, once again, supported Belmont with a huge pledge of £200k towards improving our facilities to provide inclusive sports opportunities for our children and the community.'

On his way to John O'Groats, Mr Day came through Cheltenham and was escorted into Belmont by Cycle Stars and Goals Beyond Grass cyclists. He was welcomed with huge cheers of support by the many families and friends who had gathered at Belmont for a day of sport, crafts, and fun.



Attendance matters – an important reminder

At Belmont we focus on excellent attendance for all as we know that this has a positive impact on progress.

If your child is not going to be in school you **MUST** call the school and speak to someone in Reception or leave a message. **The number is 01242 216180, and you can leave a message on the attendance line.** Please **DO NOT** Dojo teachers about absence.

Phone calls need to be made by 8.30am at the latest please, so we can inform the class team.

It is also important for us to know if your child is running late. Again, please call the office, or leave a message.

If your child is not in school by 9.15am, and we have not heard from you, the office team will call you to ensure that your child is safe with you, and to determine the reason for absence.

If there is no reply, we will begin the process of working through all the contacts you have provided.

Please always ensure that we have a correct, up-to-date number for you, and for all your emergency contacts.

If your child is ill, please call the office each day of the illness unless you have been advised to keep your child off for a certain amount of time, and the office is aware of this.

If there are any exceptional circumstances for absence, including medical appointments, these must be communicated to school, and authorised in advance.

If you are collecting your child during the school day you must come to Reception and your child will be brought to you. Children must not be collected from Primary doors please, only from Reception.

Thank you for your support with this very important process, which is – as always – focused on safeguarding your child.

Letter from the Library



Thank you to all, as we have had a lovely start to the first term. With the emphasis on choosing our own books based on personal choice, and speaking and listening skills to discuss the world of books, I have been amazed at the enthusiasm that we all have for books and the library space. This term I have been reading excerpts from a wide variety of fictional favourites to encourage and enrich our choices. Please come and have a delve into my pile of giveaways, brilliant non-fiction books to take home and enjoy.

Enjoy the Beautiful Colourful Half Term holiday and slip in a scary story if you dare!

Community News

MP's support for cycling at Belmont

Cheltenham's MP Alex Chalk took the time to pop into Belmont over the summer for a first-hand experience of the amazing cycling activities taking place.

Meeting up with Cycle Stars, Alex chatted to coach Steve Preston about Belmont's exciting plans for an athletics' and cycling facility, and the MP was very keen to help provide opportunities for young riders to be coached and race in a safe environment.

Alex was very impressed with the number of Cycle Stars attending and to view the trophies and medals the children have won.



Community News

TwoCan Theatre Company – new Cheltenham sessions

TwoCan is an inclusive theatre company that has been running a youth theatre for young people living with disabilities aged from 11-25 years of age for over eight years. Many of your students already attend our sessions on a Monday evening in Gloucester and we love having them with us.

We are now aiming to expand our sessions offering opportunities for younger children as well. We will be starting sessions in Cheltenham at the Reddings Community hall for children aged 5-14 years – please see the poster here for more information.



TwoCan Youth Theatre

Venue: Reddings & District Community Centre, North Road West,
The Reddings, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 6RF

Shining Stars

Day/Time: Wednesday 4.15 pm - 5.30 pm
(school years 1 – 3/ 5-8-year-olds, living with or without disabilities)
£45 for a ten-week term

Centre Stage

Day/ Time: Wednesday 5.45 pm - 7 pm
(school years 4-8 /9-14-year-olds, living with or without disabilities)
£45 for a ten-week term

TwoCan's Youth Theatre encourages confidence building and the development of aspirations to engage with the arts. The group plans and creates their own work and finds public platforms to showcase what they have produced.

If you would like to know more please contact Louise on 07941218520 or email louise@twocantheatre.org.uk

TWOCAN INCLUSIVE THEATRE
COMPANY

Growing Hope

As part of the continuing Growing Hope project in school, for children who have experienced a significant bereavement, we took a trip to Dundry Nursery in the mini bus. Here are just a few of the thoughts and ideas that the students had during their visit...

'We bought LOADS of bulbs to plant and we are thinking of asking people to sponsor a bulb for our garden so we can raise some money for our garden and for Winston's Wish.'

'We've already planted lots of things like lavender, buddleia, rosemary and bright colours for insects and bees.'

'We made a bowl full of rocks and sugar water for the butterflies and bees.'

'It's an actual garden now, it was so bare, we had to dig and get rocks out so the grass could grow. We've now seen birds but they are mainly seagulls and pigeons so now we want to get some special bird feeders to encourage lighter animals and smaller birds. The group are hoping to fundraise by a hot chocolate sale in the garden.'

'We've thought about recycling and reusing materials such as metal bucket, watercans, pipes, tubes, logs, pallets.'

'You can see we want to make rain chains out of recycled materials to collect rain and other ways like guttering and watering cans and pipes. It will help us to keep the plants alive when it gets hot like this summer.'

'We want to make sculptures out of reclaimed wood. They will help us remember our loved ones and make the garden look nicer.'

'We would like to make flower sculptures out of wood or hub caps. We could have our loved ones' names on each flower.'

'Use mirrors to make our garden have infinite reflections and make an entrance to our garden from wood to it feel special and like going into a secret place.'

'We would like to add sensory panels so all children can enjoy the garden. Some people have different sensory abilities in our school.'

'Convert the existing shed into a potting shed or bird hide, or a place to connect. We could hold our weekly group, share stories, and invite parents.'

'It's important to us to keep us planting and growing and painting. Because we are planting stuff and doing good stuff for the environment you get to socialise with people and talk about our special people.'



ALLIGATORS CLASS

Music, Maths, and Me!

In Alligators we have been focusing on the topic 'all about me'. We have been settling into our new class and building some positive relationships.

In English we have been using various media to extend our pre-writing skills alongside accessing Attention Autism sessions to develop our listening and attention skills. In maths we have been improving our understanding of number and applying this knowledge using objects and pictures.

We have loved our music therapy sessions where we have explored instruments as well as having sessions in the sensory room and soft play. We have been our own artists to create self-portraits, enjoyed water play in Thrive and practised some basic cooking skills too.



BUSY BEES CLASS

Friendships, play and sharing

The Busy Bees have all settled into their new class fantastically, we have seen some lovely friendships form and have been developing our play and sharing skills.

We have been learning all about ourselves, our feelings and our families through the theme of Mr Men and Little Miss. The children have enjoyed learning about our zones of regulation to talk about their feelings and other people's feelings as well as matching the Mr Men to the zones.

We have also learned about our different body parts and drew around our bodies and labelled them. The children have really enjoyed our food technology lessons where they have learnt about the foods we eat at different meal times, prepared the foods and tried them. We finished the term with our fantastic Harvest festival performance. Well done Busy Bees.



CHEETAHS CLASS

Senses on full alert outdoors

What a great first term Cheetah class has had! In English we have been writing recounts of our weekend and different stories. We have been learning all about number in Maths and have been exploring number in different ways. This term we have explored the outdoors through our five senses, scavenger hunts, bug hunts, forest school and creating art using natural objects. Cheetahs have been learning about kind and unkind behaviour in PSHE. We have been very creative this term by learning our Harvest song, dancing, singing, exploring musical instruments and finger painting.



DOLPHINS CLASS

Getting creative with chocolate and clay

In Dolphins Class this term there has been lots of outdoor learning, including finding leaves and printing them onto clay. We also made some chocolate owl toast, which was delicious! Squeak the hamster has also been enjoying her time in Dolphins Class.

Walt: Creating leaf prints



ELEPHANTS CLASS

Writing tales of great adventures

Elephants Class has settled really well into the new term, and has been very busy with our topic "This is me".

Meanwhile in maths we have been learning about place value, number and addition, and in English we have been creating our very own adventure stories - from going to Disneyland Paris, to the moon, and even to Japan to buy a Tesla.

Elephants have enjoyed outdoor learning and taking weekly visits to the forest school area. We have made self-portraits using natural materials that we found.



FOXES CLASS

Creature Creations

This term Foxes class has settled in extremely well and has been learning all about Myths and Legends. They have enjoyed finding out about different mythical creatures and legends.

We have even had a go at drawing these characters in art and making creatures using different materials. Have a look at some of our creatures!



GIRAFFES CLASS

Animal magic in fantastic first term

It's been our first term at Belmont, and what a term it has been! The children have been getting to know their new school, new classmates and having lots of new experiences together as a class.

This term we have been learning about animals in Our World. The children have spent time learning about the different characteristics of animals and grouping them by what they eat, where they live or by their features. The children also created their own imaginary animals and labelled them. Giraffes enjoyed a fantastic trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park where they got to see lots of the animals they had been learning about.

In DT, they have explored different materials and joining techniques. The children made puppets using paper and split pins, socks and glue and felt and wool. They planned, created and evaluated their puppets. The sock puppets, of their favourite animal, all looked great and the children enjoyed playing with them.



HIPPOS CLASS

Hippos get baking

What a fantastic start to our secondary journey!

Team Hippos have had a great time this term. We have enjoyed riding the bikes and some of us have ridden a bike for the very first time even though we were a bit scared to start with.

Not only have we learnt how to bake bread, we also made amazing pizzas and chocolate cakes and were very proud to take our food home to share with our families.

We have done yoga, played in the soft play, had hot chocolate and marshmallows at outdoor learning and been on an amazing trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park.

We can't wait to see what we will get up to after half term!



IBEXES CLASS

Ibexes in the wild

The Ibexes have had a great start to term and our Year 7 pupils have settled well into the class.

For Our World this term we have been learning about animals. To end the term and the topic we have been to visit lots of animals at the Cotswold Wildlife Park. The class had a lovely time exploring the park and saw lots of animals including lions, giraffes, rhinos and penguins.



JAGUARS CLASS

Wildlife wonders

This term Jaguars Class has been learning about our 'fabulous senses'. They have used their senses to explore outside and enjoyed a fantastic trip to the local park where they got to enjoy hot chocolate and biscuits as well as explore the play equipment. Over the past seven weeks we have spent time thinking about what we could see, smell, hear, feel, touch and taste. The children's favourite learning activity was tasting different foods - blindfolded.

They were all able to work out what they were tasting. Their favourite taste was chocolate and their least favourite taste was lemon.

This term we have all planned, created and evaluated our own sock puppets based around our favourite animals. They all looked amazing when they were finished and were put on display in the corridor for everyone to look at.

The children have all enjoyed getting to know the class turtles, Casey and Bert. They all take it in turns to feed them and make sure they are happy.



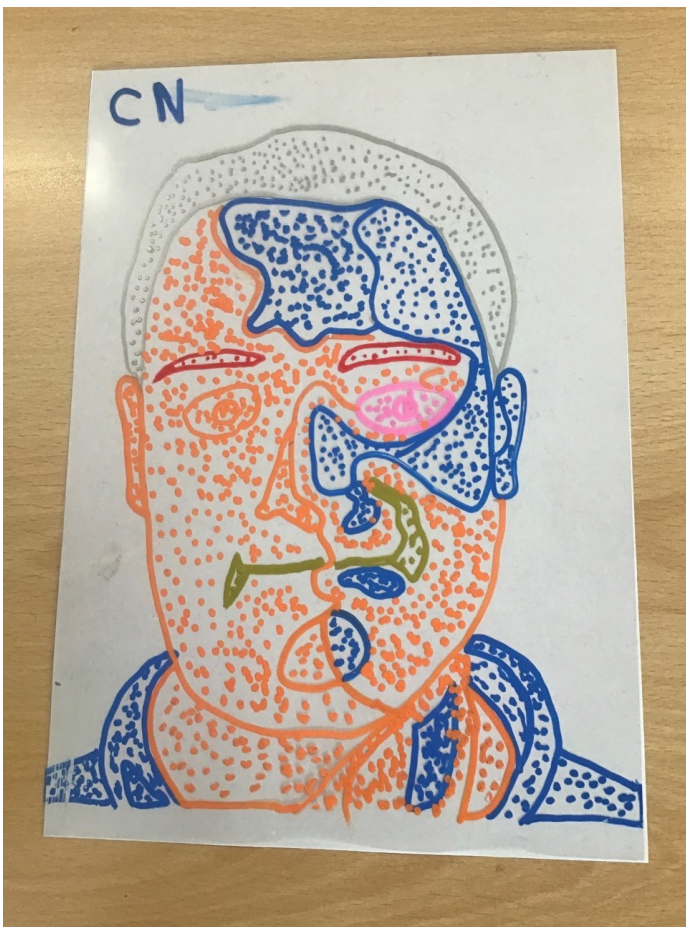
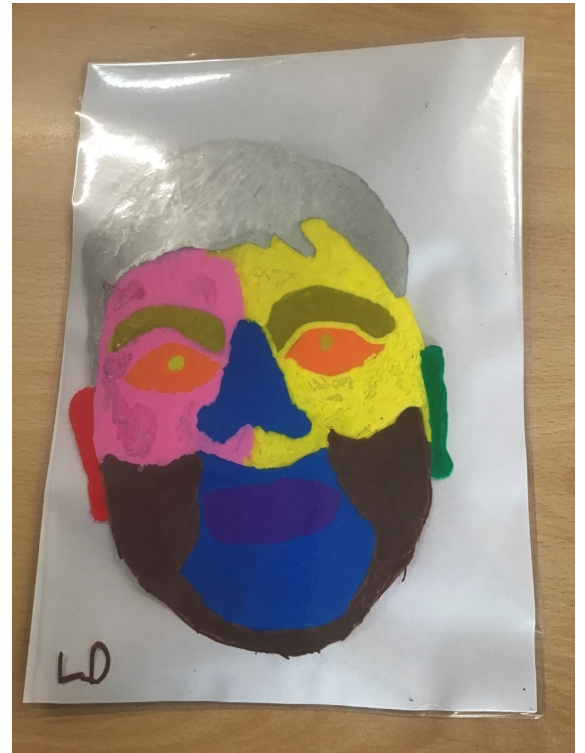
KOALAS CLASS

Koalas

Koalas have settled back into the new academic year well. This year they have been joined by two very cheeky guinea pigs Peanut and Hash Brown. The children have thoroughly enjoyed their company and have learnt a lot about being responsible for animals. Every day, they contribute to cleaning the cage, collecting grass, chopping vegetables, changing the water and filling up dry food.

As well as guinea pig care the children have been learning about volcanoes, the rock cycle, pop art, growth mindset and problem-solving using addition and subtraction. For English, pupils have transitioned well into their new groups and have had fun discovering new reading materials and exploring different ways of writing.

Next term we hope to delve into the world of 'The Secret Garden'.



LLAMAS CLASS

Action-packed learning, indoors and out

Llamas class has settled into Year 9 fantastically well. Already, they have taken part in numerous activities with a real focus on practical and active learning. In maths they have been investigating place value, and Llamas have been outside using nature to support them with their learning.

In Our World, Llamas have been learning about the earth and its layers. They were brilliant at creating models of this using plasticine and it was exciting to see the layers when they cut their globes in half.

Llamas have also been showing off their cooking skills and have so far made their own Naan bread, designed a special sandwich and cooked up some cheese scones. Llamas wish everyone a great half term.



MONKEYS CLASS

Dens, hens, and saving the world

We have had a busy start to the term in the Monkeys Class. The topic for this term is 'Look Around' and through our learning we will be exploring the world around us. We have done a variety of activities. We have learned about the different continents around the world, and have also thought about what environmental issues the world may be facing, such as plastic pollution. In Outdoor Learning we have very much enjoyed den building.

Recently Mr Thurston went to the woods and collected lots of sticks and logs for us. The Monkeys Class helped to unload the van and then split into groups and started to work together to build dens. It was interesting to see all the different ideas that the pupils had for their den designs but it was equally impressive to see the team work, communication and problem-solving skills that were also developing in front of us.



We are sure some children have already mentioned this but we are also really excited to announce the arrival of the chickens to Belmont School. Here are pictures of the four hens and their names. The Monkeys are currently responsible for looking after the chickens, checking their food, water and collecting their eggs daily. They are a great addition to the Belmont community and are frequently visited by many children and adults throughout the day who enjoy watching and handling them.

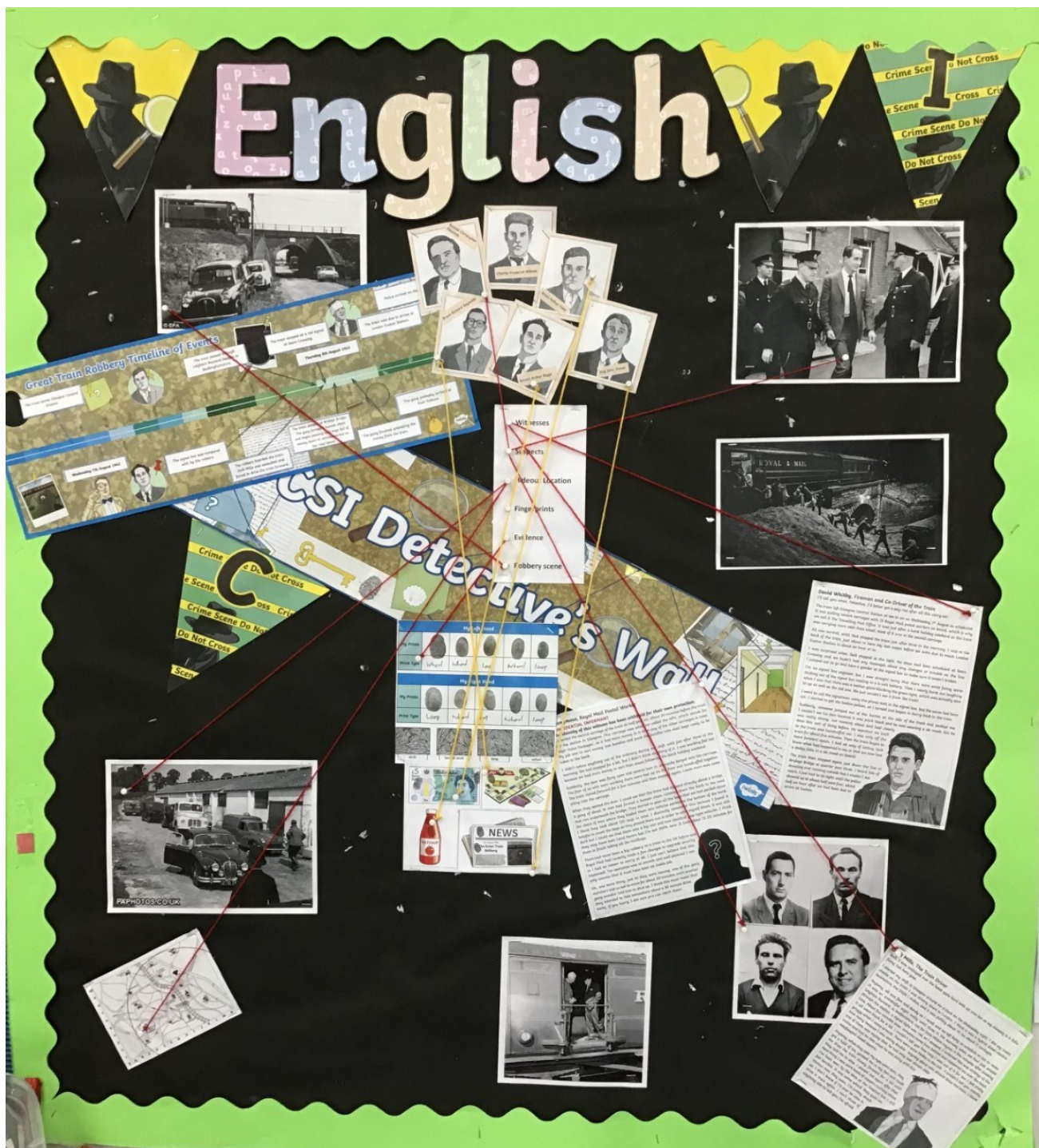


NIGHTOWLS CLASS

Taking a close look at the evidence...

This week we have welcomed new pupil Evie to Night Owls.

In English this term we have become detectives investigating The Great Train Robbery, a true life crime that shocked the nation in 1963. We have looked at fingerprints and pictures of the suspects and pupils were excited to visit the crime scene on Google maps.



OTTERS CLASS

Lively Otters get to grips with crime writing

Otters Class has had a great start to Year 10! It's been great to get to know all the children and it's lovely to have a class with such a full-on personality! Our topic this term has been crime – the class has thoroughly enjoyed this, and students have become keen crime writers.

This term has also seen some of our pupils take part in a football match against Milestone School. It was so great to take them off-site and see them enjoy playing as part of a team. It was a bonus for us to win, too! Towards the end of the term, we also had the chance to take all Otters off-site for a trip to Gloucester Cathedral, Pittville Park and KFC, all were on their best behaviour and we had a great time!



PANDAS

Balancing work with friendly competition!

Pandas have settled back into school life brilliantly and are well underway with their coursework in several subjects.

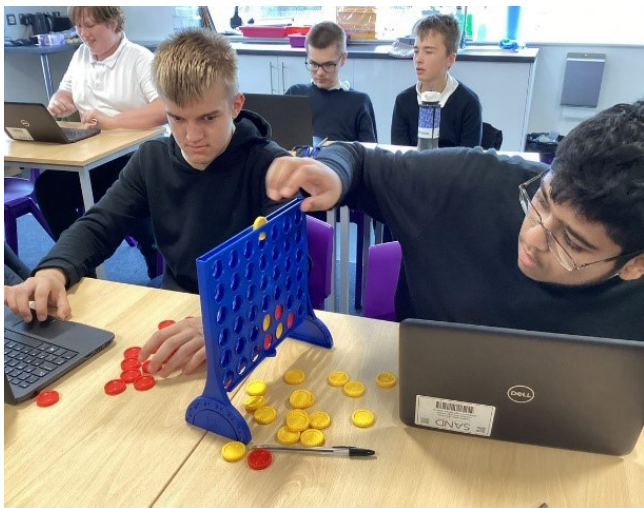
With transitions to college happening this term as well, it is hitting home that this year is our last with these fantastic young people.

To offer some relief from the coursework and modular exams, Pandas are currently in the midst of a Connect 4 tournament.

Mrs Cartwright, Miss Stanley and I are all involved and are yet to win a game! Hopes of a top four finish are fading quickly!

Fresh air and plenty of exercise in this Autumn sunshine has also been on the agenda before the cold weather draws in. Looking forward to another busy and fulfilling term in November.

Have a great half term.



QUAILS

Holding fast to summer!

Quails' students have settled in really well this term, knuckling down to work on their core subjects and their coursework. To great acclaim, they also presented the first school assembly to the whole secondary staff and students, based on 'Relationships.' The theme ties in with Quails' PHSE topic of 'respectful relationships'.

In our maths lessons, Quails have been looking at the topic 'Calendar and Time', and have worked hard at exploring days of the week and months of the year. Every member of class has been using analogue and digital clocks, and applying time to real life situations and scenarios.

Quails have been thinking about holidays, and watching episodes of 'The Travel Show' in their English lessons. They have been reading newspaper reviews about locations, and looking at holiday leaflets and fact files on different destinations around the world. Quails have written postcards and compared these to formal letters, written reviews about a hotel that they read about, designed information leaflets and posters, and even written a brochure to try to sell the location to the customer.

For our product design we are keeping with a summer theme of designing a sunglasses case which we are in the process of making.

In our active skills sessions Mr Freeman has been coaching Quails on how to gain strong control of the boccia ball, and students have been building on their teamwork skills and communication in sport.

In Art, Quails have used a range of mixed media and applied the notion of 'chance' to guide their choices. Sometimes we used dice to decide on what our next choice of colour would be. or allowed gravity to determine the outcome.

