



Dear Parents & Carers,

Our INSET day today has given the staff team time to focus on improving the provision for our learners at Pilgrims' Cross.

Developing the quality of teaching and learning is key to moving the school forwards. Today, we looked at the quality of questioning in the classroom and how learners can be supported and stretched when they articulate their answers. We also talked about how important it is to secure the pupils' learning behaviours in order that they access the learning content on offer.

Mr Edginton also led some staff training on our new handwriting scheme, *Kinetic Letters*. The teachers and learning support assistants learned about the progression in handwriting style that we are implementing in school.

Children at Pilgrims' Cross deserve the best teaching and learning, giving them the best opportunities in life. For me, it was exciting to hear the conversations that staff were having together about what they have got planned for the children.

We look forward to welcoming them back next week!

Jim Cascarini – Headteacher

headteacher@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Vision Awards

Due to the INSET day this Friday, we did not have Vision Awards this week.

What we have been learning this week

Willow & Oak

We've had another great week in Oak and Willow class. In phonics we have learnt the sounds g,o,c,k and are working hard to practise blending.

We have enjoyed the sunshine at the end of the week and explored our amphitheatre. We loved picking apples from our orchard, washing them and then eating them for snack. The worms and slugs were enjoying our garden area and we were fascinated by how they move. We observed them and then carefully placed them back in their habitats.

In maths we have been categorising and grouping different objects. Our buttons have been thoroughly sorted and are now beautifully colour-coordinated!

We have been practising our pencil grip in kinetic letters and are all working hard to use our 3 friends grip. It's pretty tricky but everyone is trying really hard with this.

In discovery we have been working collaboratively, listening to others' ideas and then incorporating these into our designs. The London bus that we built took us on an amazing journey through London past Tower bridge and Big Ben. It's been a wonderful week exploring our imaginations.

Well done everyone.

Mrs CK, Mr Edginton and Mrs Treasure.

Sycamore & Maple

The children in Year One have been working really hard this week in their Maths. They have learnt to use the vocabulary - greater than, less than and equal to when comparing groups of objects and numbers. The children then moved on to sequencing numbers by value. Next week we move on to completing number lines and adding the parts of a number to find the whole.

In English the children have been planning and writing the opening to *Old Bear*. They have worked incredibly hard on their sentences, and we are really proud of the writing they have produced. Well done, Year One!

In History the children explored toys from the past and began thinking about how they were different from our toys today. They talked about what they were made of, how they moved and whether they were dull or colourful.

Due to the INSET Day the children will keep their reading books for a further week.

We hope you have a fun three-day weekend and look forward to seeing you on Monday!

Mrs Edgington, Miss Miners and Mrs Oliver-Hawkins

Lime & Hazel

Thank you to all who attended the Meet the Teacher meetings- it was a lovely opportunity to meet you all. This week in English we have continued our sentence work and have been making sentences more interesting, using two adjectives before a noun (ferocious, frightening tiger!). We have been continuing working on ensuring children independently start their sentences with a capital letter and ending with a full stop. This is all linked to our class text "A River".

In maths we have been working on finding missing numbers on a number line (intervals of 1's and 10's). Estimating where to place numbers on a number line using our place value knowledge and answering some very simply-worded maths problems.

In Music we've been learning about call and response and making safari music out of untuned percussion instruments which was a whole lot of fun! In Geography we've been learning about the Equator. In RE we have had discussion about Harvest festival and the meaning behind it. Next week please bring reading folders on Friday for the book change!

Have a great weekend

Miss Samuel and Miss Dewsbury

Elm & Ash

Year 3 have had another hard-working week. We completed some great big writes about seeing the Iron Man for the first time. We also started to compare numbers up to 1000! In science, we had great fun learning about tendons and muscles. Also, continuing our 4 Reads unit, we have managed to have really detailed discussions about Mowzer and Old Tom.

Mr Dookheran & Mrs Bryan

Beech & Pine

It's been a wonderful week in Year 4, with some exciting writing opportunities based on our focus book 'The Whale'.

This is a picture book, so it has been our job to create and write the narrative from the powerful imagery within. We are now entering the final writing phase when the children, on their tiny sailing vessel, discover the whale in stormy seas. The huge sea creature leaps over the boat and the children capture this magnificent moment on their camera. We now need to replicate this within an exciting narrative retell.

The children have also been enjoying the reading and studying of 'Matilda' by Roald Dahl. Miss Trunchbull is the sort of headteacher nobody would want, so we are very pleased we have Mr Cascarini!

In Geography the children have been learning about the four layers of the Amazon rainforest and the animals and creatures that live there. Interestingly, we have created body percussion to mirror the sounds that each of these demonstrate.

Roll on next week. Well done Year 4.
Mrs Howick, Mrs Featherstone and Mr Osmond

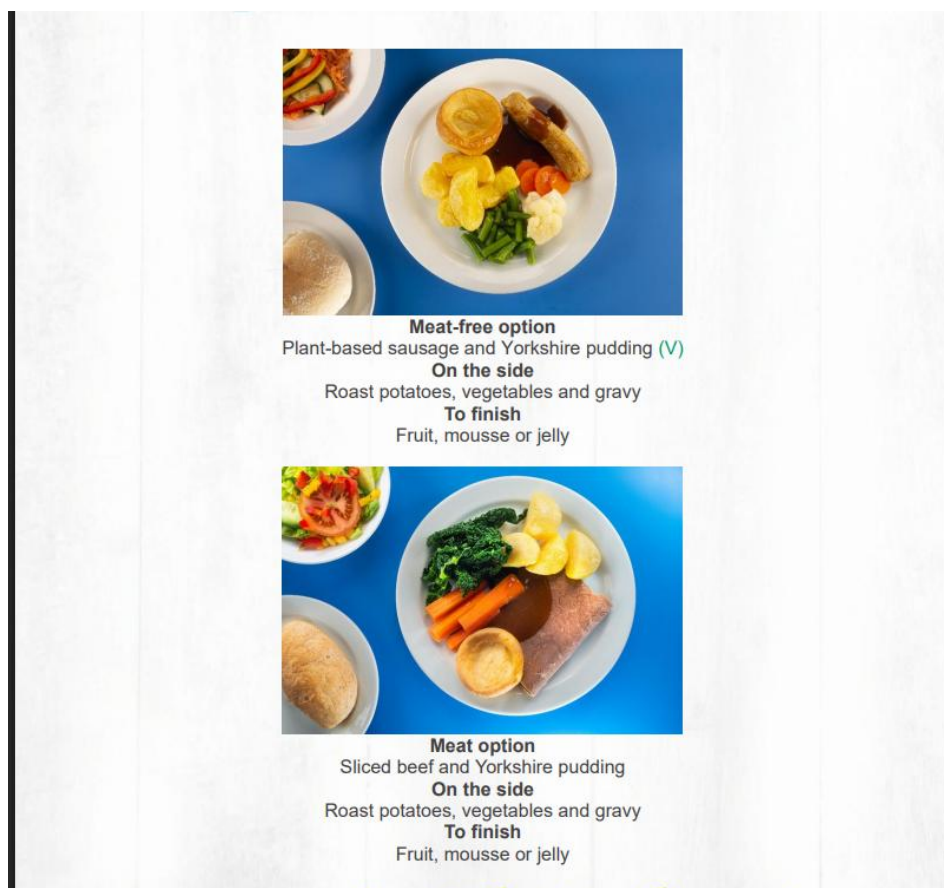
Aspen, Hawthorn & Juniper

In Year 5/6 this week, we have finished our Maths learning journey in place value. The children have been investigating negative numbers and understanding reasons why -2 has a greater value than -10 . We have also begun to think about planning and writing our diary entry in English. We have looked at formal and informal language, as well as mastering using dashes for parenthesis. Finally, we have furthered our learning around WW2, looking at the impact of the blitz on several locations around the country and why these locations were targeted. Well done to all the children for their hard work and perseverance this week!

Mr Childs, Mr Hambidge and Mrs McNee

School Census

You may not know, but our funding comes in part through the rather random figure of how many children have a school dinner on Census Day, which is **Thursday 3rd October**. We would love AS MANY CHILDREN AS POSSIBLE to have a school meal on Thursday next week. Here are the choices...



School Photographers

On Monday 20th October, Tempest Photographers will be in school to photograph your children for their annual individual portraits.

If you would like to have siblings photographed together, we ask that you come to the school hall from 7.55am and this can be done. We will be unable to take sibling photographs during the day. If you have pre-school or older siblings, you wish to have included then of course please bring those with you also for that 7.55am slot.

These photos make great Christmas presents for relatives!

Computers required!

Have you recently upgraded your computers at work or home? If you have laptops or tablets that are not too old, we would always be grateful for them, to allow us to develop our teaching of computing further. Please do contact the office if you can help!

Attendance

Our current whole school attendance this year so far stands at 96.4% which is brilliant. Thank you to parents for ensuring children are attending every day and for supporting us with this. I continue to want to work together so please do reach out to me if you need any help with routines/barriers or concerns related to your child attending school.

We have also seen a marked improvement in the number of children who are arriving at school on time and ready to learn. Having a positive start to the day alongside their classmates sets the children up to thrive, so again thank you for ensuring good time keeping. We will continue to monitor this and be in touch if we see regular lateness.

Have a lovely weekend - Mrs Hathaway Familysupport@pilgrimscross.co.uk

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GENERATIVE AI SAFETY

Generative AI tools – such as ChatGPT – are now commonly used by children. In fact, 3 in 4 pupils in the 2024 Annual Literacy Survey reported using generative AI, up from just 2 in 5 the previous year. While these tools can boost learning and creativity, they also raise concerns around misinformation, privacy and overuse. This guide explores the key risks and how to support safe use.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

MISINFORMATION AND ACCURACY



Generative AI can sometimes produce false or misleading content. Children – and even adults – may assume the information is accurate and trustworthy. This can affect learning and understanding of important topics. It's vital to teach children to critically assess all information, even when it comes from AI.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Because generative AI is trained on vast datasets from across the internet, there is a chance it may occasionally generate harmful or inappropriate content. Without supervision, children could encounter disturbing or unsuitable material. Active monitoring and clear usage boundaries can help reduce this risk.

PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

Some AI tools ask for personal details or store users' interactions. If privacy settings are not correctly configured, children's personal data could be exposed or misused. Teaching good digital hygiene and setting strong privacy controls is essential for protecting children online.

REDUCED CRITICAL THINKING



Relying too heavily on AI-generated responses may reduce children's willingness to think independently. If they consistently use AI to solve problems or complete tasks, it could impact their ability to reason, analyse and form their own ideas. Encouraging thoughtful reflection is key.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY



Regular use of generative AI can contribute to increased screen time and less real-world interaction. If left unmanaged, it may affect physical activity levels, sleep, and social development. Striking a healthy balance between online and offline activities is important for wellbeing.

UNCLEAR ETHICAL BOUNDARIES



Children may not fully understand the ethical implications of using AI to complete homework or creative tasks. This can lead to unintentional plagiarism or dishonest academic practices. Conversations around responsible use and academic honesty are crucial.



Advice for Parents & Educators

ESTABLISH CLEAR GUIDELINES

Set clear, age-appropriate rules for when and how generative AI can be used. Reinforce these regularly to help children develop a healthy, respectful and informed relationship with the technology.



ENCOURAGE CRITICAL EVALUATION

Help children to question the accuracy of AI-generated information and seek out additional trusted sources. This builds essential digital literacy skills and supports better decision-making.



PROMOTE ACTIVE SUPERVISION

Keep an eye on how the children in your care use AI tools. Check in regularly to ensure they're using them appropriately and be ready to step in if something doesn't feel right.



ENHANCE PRIVACY AWARENESS

Talk to children about the importance of keeping personal information private. Make sure privacy settings are in place and explain how data shared with AI tools could be used.



Meet Our Expert

Brendan O'Keefe, Deputy Headmaster and Director of Digital Strategy at Eaton House Schools, has extensive expertise in digital safety, safeguarding, and generative AI in education. As an author and speaker on digital literacy and online safety for institutions such as The National College, Brendan guides parents and educators in creating safe digital learning environments.



Recorder lessons

Recorder lessons began this week. We are offering 15 spaces for children in Year 2-6 to learn recorder on Wednesday mornings, during school time. The price will be £15 for the term. Recorders will be provided- or bring one from home! Sign-up opened on Arbor last week- first-come, first-served.

School Performance

The results data from the last academic year, including last year's Year 6 SATs is available on our website- here: <https://www.pilgrimscross.co.uk/page/?title=Results&pid=84>

Class inboxes

We appreciate that parents & carers cannot always get in to school to speak with class teachers, if you have a comment, concern or question about your child. We have class email addresses, which are checked once a week by class teachers. They are:

Oak Class- Year R- (Mrs Cleary-King/Mrs Treasure) oak@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Willow Class- Year R- (Mr Edginton) willow@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Maple Class- Year 1- (Miss Miners) maple@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Sycamore Class- Year 1- (Mrs Edginton/Mrs Oliver-Hawkins) sycamore@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Hazel (Miss Dewsbury)- Year 2- hazel@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Lime (Miss Samuel)- Year 2- lime@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Elm (Mrs Bryan)- Year 3- elm@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Ash (Mr Dookheran)- Year 3- ash@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Beech (Mr Osmond)- Year 4- beech@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Pine (Miss Howick/Mrs Featherstone)- Year 4- pine@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Hawthorn (Mr Childs)- Year 5/6- hawthorn@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Aspen (Mrs McNeen)- Year 5/6- aspen@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Juniper (Mr Hambidge)- Year 5/6- juniper@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Pupil information

Is your contact information up to date on Arbor? Please log in to your account and update anything which is out of date, thank you.



Text system

This is an advance warning that our text system will be finishing on the 9th October. The school will continue to contact parents/carers, but this will be by email not text. If we have not got up-to-date email contacts for you, please update your Arbor information or call in to the school office- thank you!

Key dates

- Wednesday 8th October - Flu Vaccine Clinic
- Monday 20th October - Individual School Photographs
- Monday 20th October -Year 1 Class Celebration @ 2.15pm
- Tuesday 21st October - Year 3 Class Celebration @ 8.45am
- Tuesday 21st October - Year R Class Celebration @ 2.15am
- Wednesday 22nd October - Year 4 Class Celebration @ 8.45am
- Wednesday 22nd October – Year 2 Class Celebration @ 2.15pm
- Thursday 23rd October – Year 5/6 Class Celebration @ 8.45am
- Friday 24th October- INSET day 3
- Wednesday 5th November – FOPS Firework Night 5.30pm-7.30pm
- Monday 5th January 2026- INSET day 4
- Friday 19th June 2026- INSET day 5

Please check out our website calendar for all relevant dates:

<https://www.pilgrimscross.co.uk/calendar/?calid=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8&pid=8&viewid=1>