



Abbey Court **MATTERS**

Spring Term 4 2025 Issue 389 Circulation 1117



TONTO PORTRAIT PAINTING



MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNORS



Chloe Knight
Parent
Governor

Hello all,

I'd like to start by saying I hope everyone has had a good start to 2025, it's flying by!

On the 14th March, I attended the Race Night held at Abbey Court School. I would just like to express what a fantastic evening it was. It was so enjoyable, such a good laugh, and a great chance to help raise funds for Abbey Court Trust. The race night raised £1000, so I'd like to extend my thanks for all that attended and made it a fabulous evening.

Being a parent governor, I must say how lucky I feel that the school do a variety of familial activities, where we get to go into school and spend time with our children. I thoroughly enjoyed the Family Feast!

Hoping that now the clocks have gone forward we will be lucky enough that spring will present itself and we can enjoy some sunshine!

Kind regards

Chloe

This term, the governors:

- ◇ Held a Full Governing Body and Finance Committee Meeting on 11th March
- ◇ Monitored Teaching Assistant Interviews
- ◇ Monitored the use of our safes
- ◇ Monitored our safeguarding processes
- ◇ The Governor of the Term attended a staff briefing

Water Cafe



P10 have been working towards a 'mini enterprise' AQA award.

P10 first designed six different flavoured waters in class, and gave their opinions on these flavours using a like/dislike board. We then used a pictogram to vote for our favourite flavours. We chose to sell lemon, and cucumber and mint to the rest of the school in our water café.

We created posters to advertise our café and put them up around school.

The café was set up outside. We used role play to practise great customer service and pre-poured our cups.

Lots of classes come to visit our café.

Each customer fed back whether they liked or disliked our water. We all had time to socialise and enjoy our drinks. The lemon water came out as the whole school favourite!

Thank you to everyone that came. All of P10 successfully completed their AQA. Great work!



Medway Youth Council



On 26th February, a group of Further Education students attended Medway Youth Council's Annual Conference. This year's focus was 'Our Community'.

Students participated in a range of activities in order to gain their views on; what we like doing in Medway, what changes we would like to see, how we learn, work experience, apprenticeships and university as routes into work. There was even a game of Bingo!

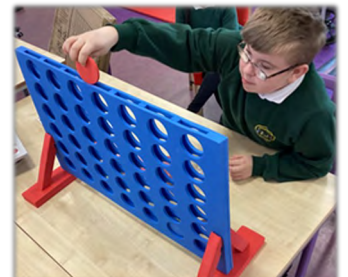
One student confidently spoke to everyone on the microphone, telling them about her flower artwork that she drew for one of the activities, informing everyone 'this is fun'.

Our group was fortunate to sit with Councillor Adam Price during the conference. He was very interested to hear about everything we do at Abbey Court, and took on board the suggestions the students were making.

Leisure Time

In S10, we have been exploring a variety of leisure focused lessons, including swimming, sensory massage, horse riding/Tonto, dance, rebound therapy, sports, the farm and reading.

Through these activities, we have discovered how much joy they bring us and how they positively impact our mental health and well-being. We agreed that taking part in these lessons not only helps us to learn but makes us feel happier, relaxed, recharged and better connected with others.





World Book Day 2025



Primary

This year's World Book Day theme was 'Read Your Way', and in the Primary department, the pupils love Sensory Stories.

Pupils excitedly joined the online interactive story telling session, from the founder of Rhyming Multi-Sensory Stories. As the story was told, they were engaging with a variety of props.

Pupils then turned some of their favourite stories into sensory stories, including The Gruffalo, We're Going on a Bear Hunt and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.



Secondary

To promote this year's World Book Day theme 'Read Your Way', pupils in the Secondary department explored reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl in different formats.

They enjoyed the story by audiobook, as a story massage, the sensory story version, as well as reading the actual book.

The idea behind this was to help the pupils to find a way of reading that suited them.

As you can see from the photographs, they had lots of fun exploring the story in a range of formats.



Further Education



This year, FE participated in 'The Big Reading Quiz of the Year'.

There was a general book knowledge round, a sound round where students linked sound clips to the corresponding book, and a story sequence round where stories had been muddled up and students had to re-write the story.

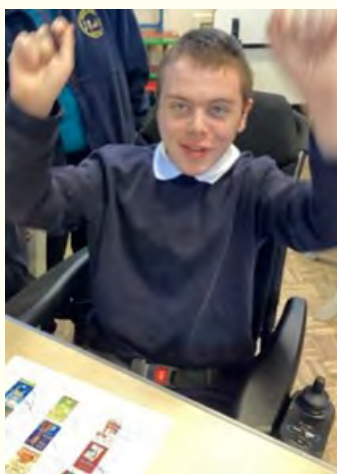
The results of the quiz are as follows...

1st Place – FE3

2nd Place – FE1 and FE4

3rd Place – FE2

We finished celebrating World Book Day with our favourite activity Bingo, although this time it was book covers and not numbers!



Multi-sensory stories are a way of storytelling through the senses. It has many benefits, including sparking imagination, promoting communication, building anticipation, developing social and emotional skills as well as being fun!

'Rhyming Multi-Sensory Stories' was set up by Victoria Nevin, who has a passion for delivering stories in a way that is meaningful to children and young adults, teaches them skills, and provides experiences to enrich their daily lives. The Rhyming Multi-Sensory Stories website has free resources available that can be used to support your child to engage with reading at home.

Website: www.rhymingmultisensorystories.com

FREE BOOKS
FOR YOUR SCHOOL
WHEN YOU BUY AT
THE BOOK FAIR!

SCHOLASTIC TRAVELLING BOOKS

A POP-UP
BOOK-STORE WITH
HUNDREDS OF
BOOKS FROM
JUST £2.99

COME TO THE BOOK FAIR

DATE: Parents Evening on Thursday 19th June



£7.99



£6.99



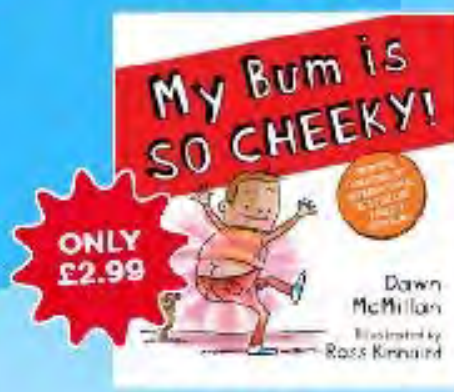
£12.99 £9.99



£12.99 £7.99



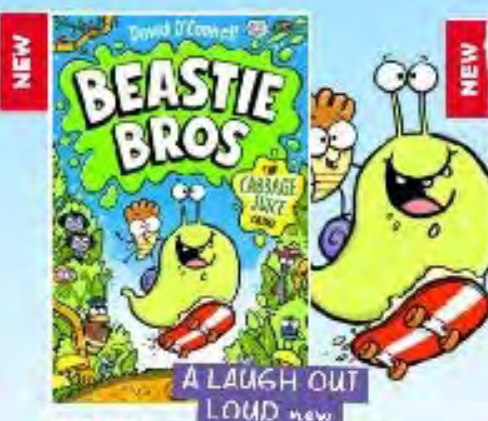
£7.99



£6.99 £2.99



£8.99



£6.99



£8.99

LAST YEAR YOUR SUPPORT HELPED DONATE
£5.3M IN FREE BOOKS TO SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE



Pizza!



The Design and Technology Scheme of Work this term has been Pizzas. S1 have investigated pizza toppings, shapes, sizes and recipes. They have designed their own pizza box logos, chosen images and added text. They have designed their own pizza using IT, then used their plans to write a shopping list of ingredients to make real pizzas. Pupils have had to use tools safely in the Life Skills kitchen and help to clear away whilst the pizza cooks. But best of all, they got to taste their scrumptious creations! The final task was to evaluate their pizzas. Everyone agreed that they scored 10/10 across the board for visual appeal and taste. Well done S1, you are all young chefs in the making!



TONTO PORTRAIT PAINTING

This term, pupil artists have investigated painting and drawing from life.

In collaboration with Caroline, our horse riding instructor, pupils studied Tonto's features, such as his blankets, harnesses, ears, mane and tail.

Pupils studied the drawing techniques of artists such as Franz Marc and George Stubbs, who were inspired by the horse, as well as looking at prehistoric cave painting from the Lascaux Cave in France. The fantastic portraits will be exhibited in the school, so that everyone can vote for their favourite artwork.

The winners will receive a rosette and be exhibited outside Tonto's room, for everyone to enjoy.



SALT Workshops

Parent Workshops are run by the in-house SALT team three times a year. These workshops are a chance to catch up with other parents, the in-house SALT team and find out more about different approaches that may be useful to their children, and are used in school throughout the day.

They usually entail a small informal presentation about the topic of the workshop that is discussed over a drink and a biscuit!

They are a forum to ask general questions, rather than to discuss individual pupils, as they are designed to be a place to share information about the different approaches that are useful.

Topics we have covered recently are:

- ◆ Eye Pointing
- ◆ Partner Assisted Auditory Scanning
- ◆ Objects of Reference
- ◆ Visuals
- ◆ AAC – Augmentative and Alternative Communication

We look forward to seeing you at the next workshop in Summer Term 6, where the topic will be Communication Books and Boards.



Language of the Term

To celebrate 'Shona', our language of the term, Ms Zaranyika and Mr Sadza visited the school to explain about the Shona language and Zimbabwe's culture.

They read a story, and taught pupils the days of the week in Shona.

Pupils from S5 then learnt how to cook Zimbabwe's traditional Maize Meal Porridge.

Pupils enjoyed making this, and eating it afterwards!



EAL Coffee Morning

Last term, we had the pleasure of hosting another English as an Additional Language (EAL) coffee morning for parents and carers.

At this meeting, parents shared ideas on how to engage and motivate their children through play.

Thank you to everyone for coming. Please keep an eye out for other future EAL events!





Music of the Far East

This term, S6 have been working hard on learning about different instruments used to create music in the Far East.

To begin with, we investigated which countries this included, and listened to the different genres of music.

S6 then worked hard to create their own.

Later on in the term, we then started learning the pentatonic scale, producing music using the same five keys (C, D, E, G, A).

S6 have enjoyed learning to use lots of different instruments.



Choral Festival

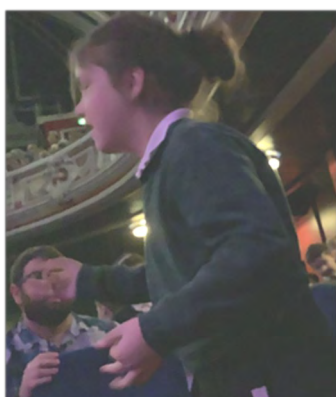


On 12th March, a group of Key Stage 2 pupils attended the Medway Music Association Music Festival at the Central Theatre, Chatham. Our pupils joined over 2300 primary school children from across Medway, performing as individual choirs and groups, to a live audience of parents, carers and families.

Pupils from P5 to P12 practised 8 songs on a weekly basis. They worked hard to prepare for the event, and used Makaton signing to support their enthusiastic performance. They then selected their favourite song to perform on stage at the festival.

Our pupils were able to experience singing with a large choir, appreciating the performances of others, as well as performing on a stage to an audience.

Having this opportunity is an important part in our exposure to, and experiences of music. It helps developing our love of, understanding and skills in music across genres and instruments.





Spring Theme Day



On 18th March, the Secondary and Further Education departments took part in a 'Spring Theme Day'.

Classes were busy completing activities on the farm, in classes and in outside areas. All Key Stages enjoyed going on a Spring walk on the farm to find signs of spring, using checklists, taking photographs and videos.

Key Stage 3 pupils made flower displays using recycled materials. They also made wild seed bombs, which were scattered in different places on the farm to add colour, variety, and to support wildlife this spring.

Key Stage 4 pupils created spring collages on a canvas, after being inspired by their spring walk on the farm.

Students in Further Education went to a garden centre to explore a range of plants. They then planned, designed and created beautiful planters in their cafe courtyard.

A fantastic effort was made by everyone, well done.



Horse Riding Theme Day



On 21st March, pupils across Abbey Court School undertook a Horse Riding and Racing Theme Day, to develop a love of a sport that might not be taught in schools.

Primary pupils visited the ponies on the farm to understand the type of equipment that is used to ride a horse. Secondary pupils enjoyed learning about the colour silks that different jockeys wear, and enjoyed watching clips of horse racing. In Further Education, students learnt about the typical diet that a jockey would eat before a race. They then made 'Ryan Moore's Fried Rice and Vegetables'.

We look forward to the next PE Theme Day about Tennis in Term 5.



LOTC Quality Badge Holders!



We are thrilled to be able to share with you that Larkin Farm now proudly holds the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom's Quality Badge. Over the past two years we have been working hard to develop our farm outreach offer. This means that we strive to provide a high-quality learning environment where local schools and colleges can bring their pupils to enhance their learning. This has been a highly valued service to many local schools who do not have access to outdoor spaces and the learning opportunities this brings. As well as supporting the local community and Medway children, it also opens up a range of inclusion opportunities for our pupils, who have been able to work alongside their mainstream peers on shared projects such as growing and planting.

The LOtC Quality Badge demonstrates that we have been through a rigorous process to check that all essential health and safety policies are in place to ensure all children are able access our farm safely. The assessment also involved a quality assurance visit to see the wonderful learning that takes place at Larkin Farm. We are really proud to now hold this badge, which means we can continue to share our provision with Medway children and young people.

So, what's next?

We are committed to offering daily outdoor learning opportunities to our pupils and recognise it as a key part of everyone's learning. Therefore, we have begun working towards the LOtC Quality Mark which recognises schools' commitment to all types of outdoor learning. We look forward to working towards this award and will keep you updated on our progress!



242

21

256

Trust Lottery Draw

89

91

90



6th Trust Lottery Draw on Friday 28th February 2025:

First prize of £40 — Caroline Martin

Second prize of £20 - Rosemary Thoroughgood

Third prize of £10 — Paul Horsman



7th Trust Lottery Draw on Friday 28th March 2025

First prize of £40 — Karen Joy

Second prize of £20— Jo Dawson

Third prize of £10— Caroline Baker

Congratulations to all of the lucky winners!



ABBHEY COURT TRUST



Abbey Court School Charitable Trust supports and fundraises for the school and community. We want to help enhance the facilities and education on offer to all of the pupils at Abbey Court.

Our current fundraising efforts are focused on raising money to maintain and develop Larkin Farm. Our goal this year is to raise more than £14,000. If you would like to help us achieve our goal, please do get in touch.

Race Night

On Friday 14th March, we held a fantastic Race Night.

After enjoying some sausage and chips, guests placed bets, and then watched on a big screen to see if they chose the winning horse.

Guests also enjoyed having a go on our mechanical horse, Tonto.

Between entry tickets, a raffle and Tonto donations, we raised an amazing £1000!

This money all goes towards supporting the animals on the farm. Thank you to everyone who came along.



★ Thank You! ★

Thank you to everyone who supports our fundraising events.

In particular, we would like to thank:

- ◆ Simon Chapman from 'Go Race Nights'
- ◆ Pauline Tullett and Asda Chatham for a lovely Easter Egg basket
- ◆ The Fenn Bell Inn for a Family Gift Voucher donation



Attention all runners!

We are really excited to announce that we have been awarded a place in the 2026 London Marathon.

More information to follow after Easter.



A Message from Sue Vallente-Kerr of Abbey Court Trust

Through my work, I get to visit many different schools, and it is always a delight and a joy to visit Abbey Court School to see the wide variety of activities our children get to experience.

One of the main highlights is of course the farm, which only exists and continues to, due to the generosity of families and friends of Abbey Court School. As a Trust, we are constantly trying to find different ways to raise money to support the farm, and provide opportunities for the children. Thank you to all of you who so faithfully continue to contribute, through the lottery, adoption of animals or attending events.

We as a Trust are very grateful.

Registered Charity Number: 1160511

Larkin Farm

Open Day



Saturday 10th May 2025 10:30 to 3:30

Templars Drive, Strood, Kent, ME2 3FD



£5 per person

**£20 for up to 2 adults and
3 children**

Under 2s go free

**Additional charges may apply -
please bring cash on the day**

**Animal Adoptees
get one free entrance ticket!**

**Please email
office@abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk
to book your tickets**

JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FAMILY FUN!

Hot Food - Cakes - Ice Cream Van - Flowers & Vegetable Plants -
Animal Adoption Boxes - Rabbit & Guinea Pig Petting Corner -
Stories in the Hedgehog Hideout - Bug Hunt - Groom a Pony -
Walk the Pygmy Goats - Walk the Alpacas - Meet the Lambs -
Hook a Duck - Tombola - and much more!



Telephone: 01634 338 220



Email: office@abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk



Abbey Court School
'We grow people'

Who are the HCAs?

Abbey Court School employs three Health Care Assistants (known as HCAs), who support the health and welfare needs of pupils. This enables pupils to maximise their educational experience. The HCAs work closely with pupils, school, parents/carers and the NHS MCH Special School Nursing Team.

What do they do?

- ◆ Support pupils and staff in class teams to meet pupils' health needs;
- ◆ Work closely with the NHS MCH Special School Nursing Team;
- ◆ Speak with parents regarding their child's medications, if required;
- ◆ Sign in/out all medications that come in to school on a daily basis;
- ◆ Help with the preparation and administration of medication that goes out on educational visits;
- ◆ Support the administration of medication for pupils on residential;
- ◆ Administer daily and emergency medications as needed, and can help with pupils' gastrostomy care and feeds;
- ◆ Carry out routine weight and height measurements for pupils who require this;
- ◆ Support the immunisations team when they come in to school;
- ◆ Provide information and resources to class teams about health related matters to support pupils, including on hand washing, teeth cleaning, personal hygiene, toileting, healthy eating and exercise, to name but a few!
- ◆ In addition, the HCAs all hold a paediatric first aid qualification.

Many pupils visit the HCAs every day. The HCAs (who were previously highly experienced Teaching Assistants at the school) therefore build strong, trusting relationships with pupils, by communicating effectively with them and making them feel comfortable when they need to visit the Medical Room.

Therapy Club



In therapy club at lunch time, we have been exploring lots of different activities to see what we enjoy!



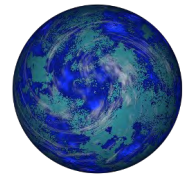
We have made pancakes and had great fun flipping them. We have done lots of different methods of painting, and some great chalking around rabbits for Easter.

Lots of pupils really enjoy the messiest of activities, especially bath foam and shaving foam.



We can't wait to try lots more activities, and to comment on our favourite sessions.

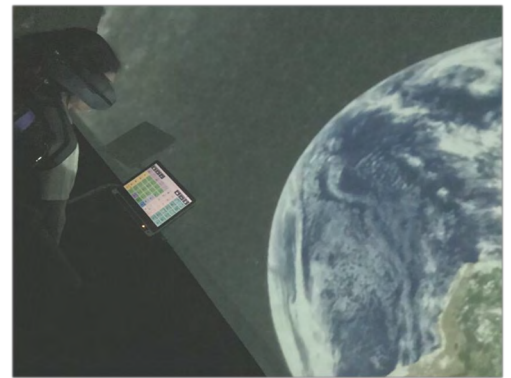
Wonderdome



On Tuesday the 18th of March, pupils were provided with the opportunity to attend a session at 'Wonderdome' mobile planetarium.

Pupils were transported on a cosmic sensory journey into space to learn about the planets and the galaxy. Pupils engaged well throughout the day, showing moments of awe and wonder, starting from the moment they saw the dome in the Rede Court Road site hall.

Thank you to Harvey from Wonderdome for running the sessions throughout the day.



Dolly and Baarbara have done it again!

Lambing season is a time of renewal and excitement on farms across the country, with the arrival of lambs signifying the arrival of spring. Larkin farm is no exception, as our amazing Zwartble sheep, Dolly and Baarbara have given birth to adorable, healthy lambs that are bouncing around, soaking up the sunshine.

Some of our students and young farmers had fantastic sessions weighing the new-born lambs to track their growth. Our smallest lamb weighed 3.72 kilograms, while our largest lamb weighed a whopping 6.25kilograms!

Come to Larkin Farm's Open Day on Saturday 10th May to see how much they've grown!



Toucan Theatre



Our primary site was delighted to welcome the Toucan Theatre for a performance of 'The Noisy Dinosaur', a vibrant, multisensory adventure that took our pupils on a journey through different landscapes in search of the dinosaur's roar!

Having been part of the creative process through a series of workshops, our pupils were thrilled to see their ideas come to life on stage. The interactive elements and immersive storytelling made for a magical experience, reinforcing the joy of participation in the arts.



Shakespeare for Schools



Our pupils had an incredible experience preparing for and performing 'Puck's Perfume Magic', our own reimagining of A Midsummer Night's Dream, as part of the Shakespeare for Schools Festival.

Further Education designed the staging, costumes and props in preparation for the show, whilst cast rehearsed leading up to the performance.

On the 13th March, pupils showcased their talents and creativity, while immersing themselves in the magic of live theatre. Watching other performances was equally inspiring, giving a deeper appreciation for Shakespeare and the power of storytelling!

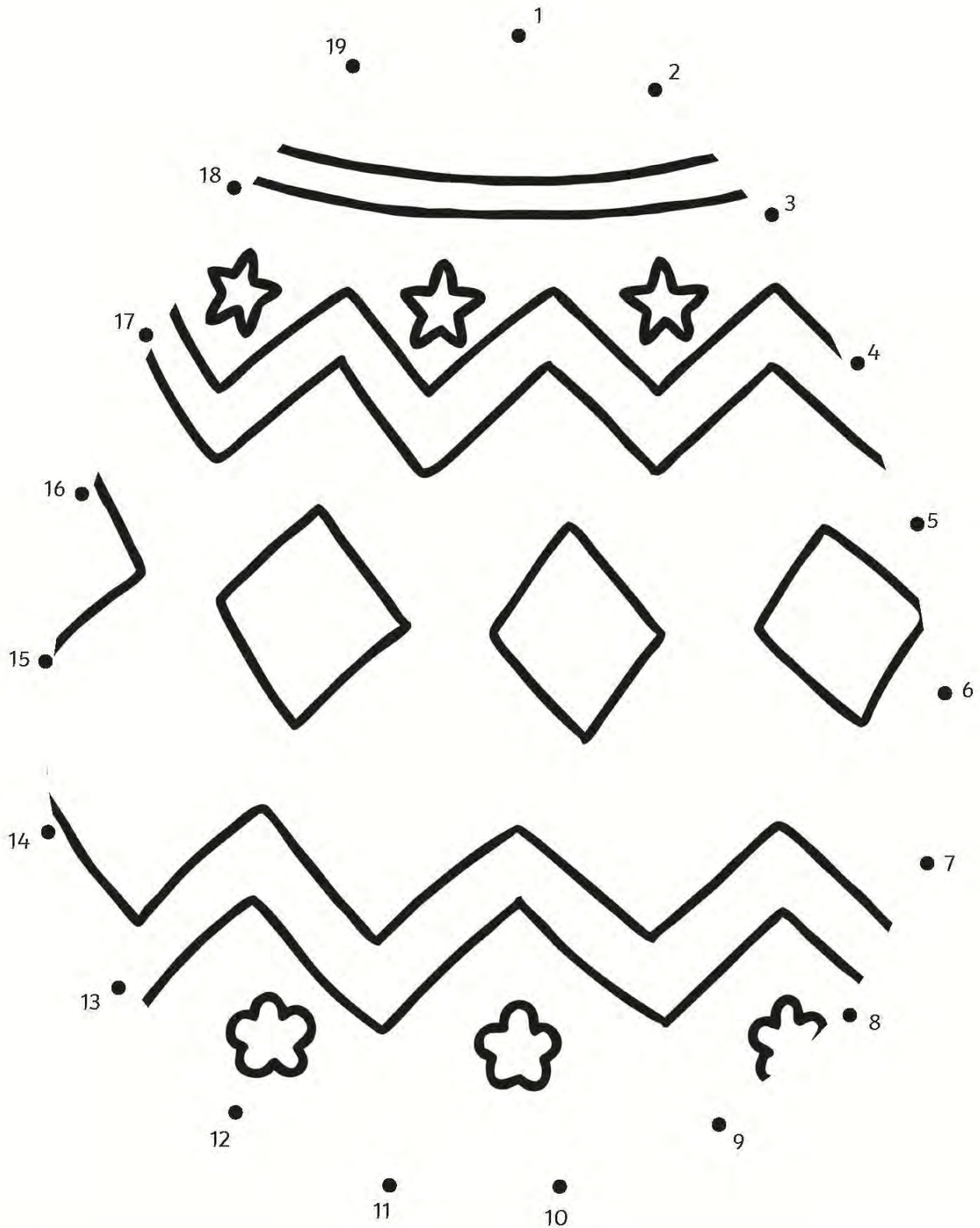
It was a truly unforgettable experience that built confidence, teamwork, and a love for the arts.

Well done to all those involved in bringing 'Puck's Perfume Magic' to life!



Siblings Page

Easter Egg Connect the Dots





Let's talk Makaton

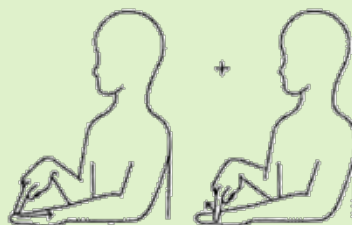
What is Makaton?

Makaton is a unique language programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate.

It supports the development of essential communication skills, such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall, and organisation of language and expression.

Please enjoy sharing these Easter Signs with your child. Please remember to use your dominate hand and to say the words as you sign them.

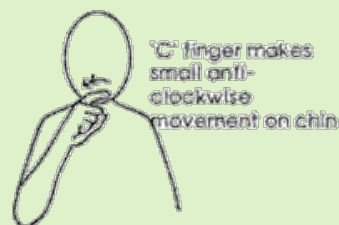
Easter



Easter Egg

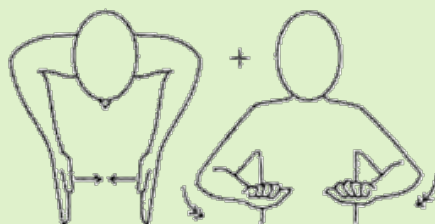


Chocolate

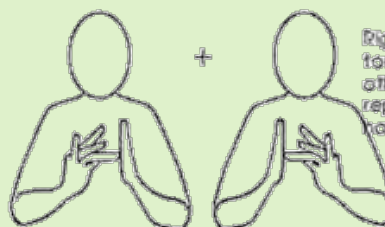


'C' finger makes small anti-clockwise movement on chin

Chick (young chickens)



Jesus



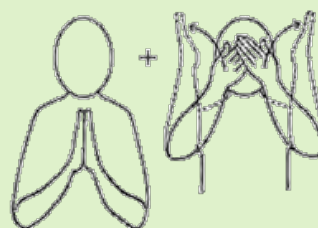
Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, then repeat with left hand

Church



Mime pulling bell rope

Sunday



Gradually uncover eyes



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF!



Robin Kochapillil — Catering Assistant

I am really excited to join the amazing community here at Abbey Court! I'm currently studying for an MSc in Global Environmental Change at the University of Greenwich, and I bring three years of experience in food safety, sustainability, and auditing for international organic and coffee standards. When I'm not talking about climate change, you'll find me drawing, painting, writing poems or binge watching tv—creative outlets that keep me grounded and happy. I'm truly looking forward to learning from you all, supporting where I can, and hopefully adding a bit of colour to school life!



Good Bye!

**We are sorry to say goodbye to Jayne Key, teaching assistant.
We wish her well for the future and a happy retirement.**

Parents' Information Board

MedwayGo Easter Programme

Book a range of activities, from sports, swimming, theatre workshops, outdoor pursuits and more!

Monday, 14 April
Tuesday, 15 April
Wednesday, 16 April
Thursday, 17 April

Bookings open on
Monday, 17 March



MedwayGo

A BETTER MEDWAY

Medway

Serving You

GO.MEDWAYGOV.UK

Hydropool

We said that we would tell you how often the hydropool was out of action. This term, there have been 7 occasions when one of our two hydropools has been out of use.

Healthy Parent Carers Course

Improving parent carers' health and wellbeing

Our children are our first priority, meaning we often neglect our own health and wellbeing. This course was developed to help parent carers put themselves first. Run by Parent Carers, over 6 weekly sessions, it uses activities to engage carers to encourage discussion and mutual support.

Course Dates

Thursday 24th April to 5th June 2025

(No course on 29th May)

10.00am - 1.00pm

Participants must commit to all 6 sessions

Future courses available both in person and virtual.

Book your patient on this free course via Joy App

The Healthy Parent Carers programme was inspired by and developed together with parent carers from the Family Faculty in the Peninsula Childhood Disability Research Unit (PenCRU) based in the University of Exeter Medical School.

Venue

**Joiners Shop,
Historic Dockyard
Chatham**



Term Dates

Friday 4th April 2025	Last day of term
Monday 7th to Friday 18th April	Half Term Break
Monday 21st April	Bank Holiday—Easter Monday
Tuesday 22nd April	Staff Development Day
Wednesday 23rd April	Children return to school