



MINERVA NEWSLETTER 5

24th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

I am delighted to welcome Mrs. Sharif and Mrs. Radford, who have joined our preschool team at the start of this term. We are excited to have them on board and look forward to the positive impact they will have on our children.

Our children have been busy setting new learning goals, both in school and beyond. It's wonderful to see their enthusiasm and commitment to their education and hobbies.

Year 2 had a fantastic trip to the SS Great Britain, where they learned about the ship's history and enjoyed hands-on activities. **Year 5** had an immersive musical experience at the Bristol Beacon, listening to an orchestra and participating in a performance using body percussion. It was a truly enriching experience for them.

The Year 3 and Year 4 teams are now busy planning exciting trips to Hampton Court Palace and the Wild Place Project. These trips promise to be both educational and fun, providing our children with valuable learning experiences outside the classroom. Our senior staff have visited every classroom and have been impressed by the children's engagement and the progress they have made since September. It is heartening to see the pride our students take in their work.

It continues to be a privilege to work with such a dedicated team of colleagues who have high expectations and a strong belief in every child's potential. Together, we are committed to providing the best possible education for our children, academically and with their personal development

As we look ahead, I am confident that this year will be filled with continued success and growth for all our children. Thank you for your continued support.

Warmest Regards,
Jenny Harvey (Principal)

YEAR 4 WE ARE ARTISTS

Year 4 have been learning about abstract art and colour mixing in artists. We practiced creating colour wheels before focusing on shades and tints to develop our understanding of how artists can manipulate colours. Our finished pieces were all so unique, we loved them!



PSHE



This term in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) the focus is Dreams and Goals

This unit of learning is part of our **'Minerva Global Citizen'** curriculum where children consider their dreams and aspirations for the future. They look at examples of people who have overcome challenges to achieve success, discuss what they can learn from these stories and how our 'Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI)' powers can help i.e our resilient starling and growth mindset butterfly. Children across the school identify barriers to achievement and discuss how they would overcome them. We believe if someone has something to strive for this encourages a sense of purpose and when they work together it can develop a sense of belonging.

During our weekly in class citizens time on Friday our focus this term is on developing children's mental and emotional health. Last year children learnt and practised strategies such as finger breathing and muscle squeezing. We will build our toolkit this year when we launch 'Children's Mental Health' week in assembly. You can join us for a **Children Learning in Class or WOW Wednesday event** later in the term to find out more.



ACADEMY COUNCIL

We currently have a vacancy on our academy council for a parent representative. As we are a diverse and inclusive school, we are looking for a member to reflect this diversity. We would particularly welcome applications from parents of Reception, Years 1 & 2 pupils and /or those where English is not their first language. Academy Councils are responsible for holding the Principal and their Leadership Team to account. For the quality and effectiveness of the academic experience of the pupils, with the aim of securing effective school improvement and ensuring all children have a positive experience whilst at Minerva. We meet as a council termly and attend termly meetings in school. For more information, please speak to Mrs Westbury or leave a message at school office and I will give you a call. Bridgett Suitters Chair of Academy Council

YEAR 2 -WE ARE HISTORIANS

Year 2 have recently been to the SS Great Britain as part of our historians learning about inspiring engineers in the Victorian era. We were lucky to have a workshop about Isambard Kingdom Brunel and a guided tour of the ship. We were amazed at the size of the ship and how different the conditions were for rich and poor passengers. We will use this learning next week as we extend our knowledge about inventors and engineers.



WE ARE PHILOSOPHERS

Towards the end of term 2, children from across the school have been Philosophers with many classes looking at Christmas as a celebration. Most have considered how Christians remember the birth of Jesus, whilst Year 1 and 2 classes have also looked into Jewish celebrations including Hannukah. We have been using our Elli power of the Spider to make meaning and links between different religions and celebrations as well as considering ones our own families at home may observe. All children at Minerva are given opportunities to share their own experiences and discuss how this may be similar or different to other children or members of other faiths including Pre-school and Reception'. Year 6 were looking at the differences between celebrations and festivals, and whether you need to be a Christian to celebrate Christmas. Year 5 were looking into Diwali and had some interesting yet challenging discussions together as a class. They are now moving on to look at how the creation story impacts Hindus today. Year 4 were looking at why a Christian festival is so widely celebrated (Christmas) and sharing experiences of Christmas amongst the children, who have many different faiths, cultures and backgrounds, similar to Year 3, who were remembering the story of Christmas. Please do speak to your children about these discussions on celebrations and festivals - maybe you could have a discussion together around the table at dinnertime! The children could demonstrate their oracy skills and SPEAK discussion guidelines to help everyone have a turn to speak. We look forward to hearing how this went!

YEAR 5- TRIP TO BRISTOL BEACON



Y5 were so lucky to be invited to watch Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra play at Bristol Beacon this term.

As well as an introduction to the orchestra, we heard well-known pieces from Moana and Pirates of the Caribbean, sea-themed songs like 'What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor' and 'Wellerman', plus some classical music by Debussy and Tchaikovsky.

Our viola players took along their violas and had the opportunity to play along with one of the songs, while the rest of us joined in with body percussion and Makaton sign-alongs. A very inspiring way to see all our music learning being put into practise by a real live orchestra!



PARENT FORUM

On a regular basis we hold parent forums, which are an opportunity for parents to join and work with us to make Minerva even better. On Friday 17th January we held a parent forum and several families joined us to share what they thought was going well and what we could improve. During this time we spent time discussing how positively the Reception children have settled in to school, how supportive the school is when new children join and how the class teachers are supportive with behaviour and spend time talking to parents.

In addition to this, we spent a lot of time discussing the school dinners and how the school dinners are described to their families. We want the school lunches to be enjoyed by as many children as possible so that they can have a warm nutritious meal in the middle of the day to help their growing brains and bodies. To help us know what to improve we are going to be sending out a survey for homework about school dinners. Please take time to complete this with your child so that we get as much feedback as possible so we are able to work with Aspen to make improvements that will make a difference.

If you would like to get involved in parent groups to help make MPA even better please join us for our next forum on Monday 27th January at 5pm. If you would like to support the school in a different way you can join the Friends of Minerva open meeting on Friday 7th February 2:00 - 3:00 or Tuesday 11th February 5:45-6:45pm to find out more about the fund raising that is planned.

This week we also held a SEND parent coffee morning which was well attended by parents and they were able to seek support from professionals beyond the school, such as the school nurse team and Bristol Parent/carer forum. If this is something that you think would be useful there will be another coffee morning held by outside professionals in term 6.

HILLFIELDS LIBRARY VISITS TERM 3

We are very lucky to be able to visit Hillfields Library regularly. Year 1 enjoyed a trip to the library last week to select books to borrow and read for pleasure.

Next term, Year 4 will be visiting to meet an author and have a writing and drawing workshop. Thank you to all the parents who volunteer to get us there and back as well - we couldn't do it without you! All our classes aim to visit the library once a term, so do look out for upcoming dates for your year groups.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 27th January 5.00pm	Parent forum meeting with Mrs Harvey & Mrs Shaw. All welcome.
Thursday 30th January	Menu change in celebration of Chinese new year.
Friday 7th February 2.00pm - 3.00pm	Friends of Minerva open meeting. All welcome.
Monday 3rd – Friday 7th February	Mental health week.
Tuesday 11th February	Internet safety day-
Tuesday 11th February, 2.30pm	Online safety workshop for parents and carers on how to support their children to keep safe online.
Tuesday 11th February 5.45pm - 6.45pm	Friends of Minerva open meeting. All welcome.
Friday 14th February 2.30pm	Parent forum meeting Equality, Diversity & Inclusion with Mrs Harvey & Mrs Shaw. All welcome.
Thursday 6th March Term 4	World Book Day—More details to follow.