



MINERVA NEWSLETTER 7

13th February 2026

According to the Met Office, we have had rain *every day* this term! Despite the weather, nothing has stopped our children from learning—both in and out of the classroom—or slowed the continued development of our play-grounds, school trips, and the exciting visitors we have welcomed.

This term, we have been delighted to host a number of visitors who were eager to learn from Team MPA. In our Reception classes, we welcomed trust leaders and teachers from across the Southwest who came to see our phonics teaching, continuous provision and learning in our outdoor environment. We also hosted leaders from across our trust who explored our writing curriculum, looking at the ways we adapt teaching to ensure all children can access learning and make progress, and spoke directly with pupils about their school experience.

We were extremely proud that every child spoken to said they feel safe at MPA and could name several trusted adults in school. Children also confidently explained how staff support their learning—through songs, talk partners, visuals, and immersive experiences like the Year 2 Victorian Day. Our Year 5 pupils were also able to recall their learning from earlier years, demonstrating how well these experiences stay with them.

As we continue our journey to become an OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) school, we are thrilled to have opened our nature area every lunchtime for one year group each week. Our Year 6 children have been particularly creative, building their own willow tunnel and choosing to return there for their pom pom treat, ending with a campfire and marshmallows. At MPA, we believe all children need enriching play opportunities that encourage them to explore, create, and enjoy the natural world. We have also invested in exciting new play equipment that will be installed later this year. Children have shared how much OPAL has improved breaktimes—saying it brings “a high percentage of fun,” keeps everyone happy, and helps them feel better the more they move their bodies.

Each year, we plan a wide range of opportunities and experiences to support children academically, socially, and emotionally. It has been wonderful to see how much the children value these activities—both within our local community and across Bristol. This newsletter highlights just some of the trips and visits they have enjoyed this term.

Thank you for your continued support and for being such an important part of our school community. We look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events, and we wish you all a restful and enjoyable break.

Warm regards,

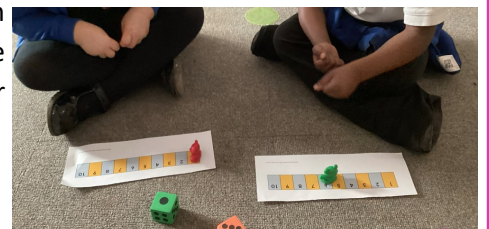
Jenny Harvey (Principal)

RECEPTION –WE ARE MATHEMATICIANS

Reception have been busy strengthening their number skills this term. The children have explored one more and one less, practised subitising skills by playing lots of dice games with friends and have been enjoying using Number blocks to find different ways to make numbers 1–5.



A highlight was sharing our learning with families during WOW Wednesday, where the children proudly demonstrated their Mastering Number skills.



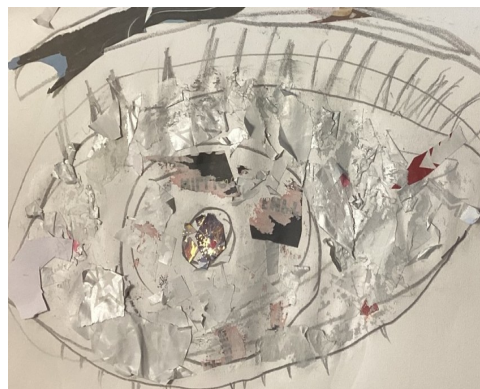
YEAR 3—WE ARE COMPUTER SCIENTISTS

It has been a busy term in Year 3! We have explored animation as computer scientists, discussed creation stories as philosophers and thought about our dreams and goals as citizens.

As scientists we have been learning all about light, how we see and shadows. We have used our spider skills to link this to our writing about Hortense and The Shadow where we have been exploring speech and dialogue.

As artists we have created collages of eyes and learnt about the different techniques involved. To end the term, we had an amazing trip to We The Curious where we were able to get inside a giant bubble, create our own animations and explore inside the human body.

As musicians we have been learning the ukulele. What a fantastic term of learning and opportunities!



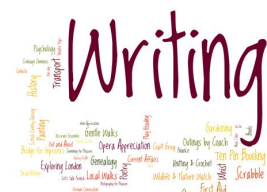
YEAR 2 TRIP TO SS GREAT BRITAIN

After learning about Victorian England, Year 2 went to the SS Great Britain. We enjoyed a workshop all about life at sea for the Victorians, playing with the toys children had at that time and writing letters home using a nib and ink.

It was such a great opportunity for our children to really bring our Victorian learning to life. This term we are learning about some more influential Victorian people and the impact of Victorian life on us today.



WE ARE AUTHORS



Over the past few weeks, students across the school have been diving into the world of creative writing, transforming their ideas into powerful narratives and non-fiction text types. From exploring character development to experimenting with rich descriptive language, MPA children have been encouraged to take creative risks and express their unique voices.

Classrooms have been buzzing with imaginative world building, thoughtful peer feedback and editing sessions, and lively discussions about what makes writing compelling. We have noticed an increased confidence in students' writing as they learn to craft narratives with purpose and creativity.

Several classes are also working toward publishing their work, showing off their improved handwriting skills following our explicit handwriting lessons. We're proud of the enthusiasm and originality and we look forward to sharing this with you at our next parent's evenings.

YEAR 5 TRIP TO THE ROMAN BATHS

Year 5 had a fantastic time at the Roman Baths, enjoying a whole host of activities including exploring real Roman artefacts, dressing up as Romans, creating our own mosaics, building arches and cranes, excavating hidden treasures and using iPads to identify carved stones and their uses. Our favourite part was learning some of the more disgusting details about the Romans' bathing habits!

Back in the classroom, we've been using our skills as scientists to find out more about solutions. We carried out three experiments to combine and separate solvents and solutes, recording our results and writing up our method and conclusion.



RAISING ASPIRATIONS



On the 30th of January we had visitors come to MPA, from the local community and wider to speak with the children about their career.

The children signed up to the careers talk they were curious about and then had opportunities to find out more about the role and ask questions.

This is linked with our topic of Raising Aspirations this term, encouraging children to set themselves goals and to think about goals they want to achieve in the future.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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| Friday 13th February | Last day of term 3. |
| Monday 23rd February | Inset day – School closed to all pupils. |
| Tuesday 24th February | Welcome all students back for Term 4 – Gates open 8.40am. |
| Thursday 5th March | World book day - There is no expectation to buy costumes. Please try to use homemade items and avoid purchasing anything. |
| Friday 13th March | Inset day – School closed to all pupils. |
| Wednesday 25th & Thursday 26th March | 3.30pm 6.00pm Parents evening. |