

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Spring Term Newsletter January—April 2025



Dates for the Diary

Pupils return to school after the Easter Break on Tuesday 22nd April 2025 for the Summer Term

Half term starts on Friday 23rd May 2025 with pupils returning to school on Monday the 2nd June 2025.

May Bank Holiday Monday 5th May



Headteacher's Message

As we come to the end of yet another busy term, we would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the fantastic progress our pupils are making across all areas of the curriculum. As you will read over the next few pages, our pupils and staff have been hard at work, not just in the classroom but out in the community as well.

We would also like to thank you for your continued support and partnership. Your involvement plays a vital role in our young people's success and we greatly value your engagement with us.

Please keep an eye out for some exciting events coming up next term on our website and in our communications home.

We wish you all a happy and safe Easter break and look forward to seeing you all again in the summer term.

OUTDOOR LEARNING

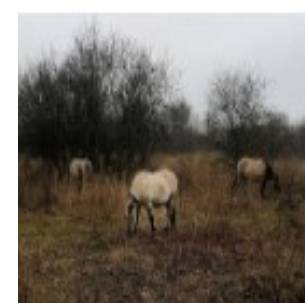
Despite fluctuations in the weather, the Outdoor Learning team has had a busy few months. The OL area has had a much needed facelift which has only been made possible by the hard work and innovative ideas from the pupils who use it. Bark has been acquired and laid, new gate locks fitted, fences fixed and a focus on the impact our area has on wildlife had led to the introduction of dry branch features, bug hotels and bee posts.



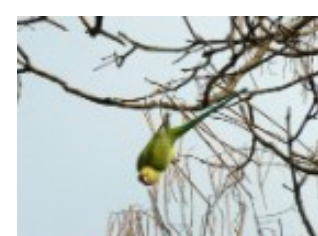
We've also been fortunate enough to have visited local areas of interest including Wilder Blean Woods and Pegwell Bay. The year 11s spent the day at Blean in hope of catching a glimpse of the "eco system engineers" who inhabit these woods. Iron age pigs, bison and long horned cattle were all spotted grazing freely and thriving in this lush environment.



We also travelled to Pegwell Bay with the year 8s and 9s in the hope of seeing the resident seal colony, we weren't disappointed. During this trip we were also fortunate to see Ring necked parakeets and Konik horses, a breed of pony from Poland used to clear scrub and grassland.



During these visits and trips

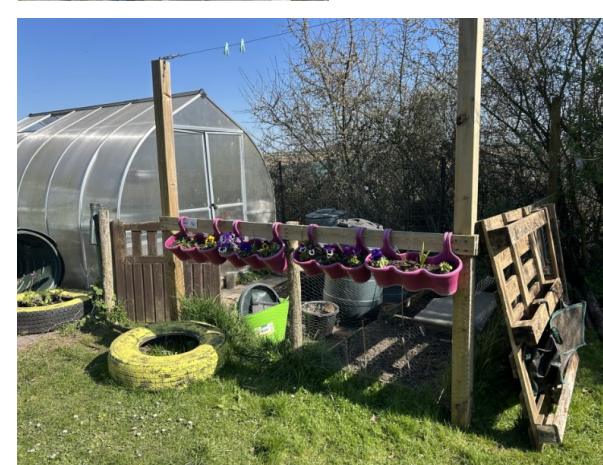
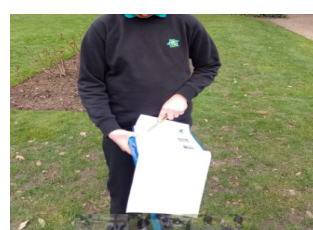


we ran our usual OL programme focussing on fire lighting, outdoor cooking, team games and continued management of our woodland space.



MATHS IN THE GARDEN

Year 8 have been using the garden as the perfect place to explore real world maths this term. Measuring flowerbeds, designing a vegetable patch and calculating mathematical concepts like shape, area and algebra all around them. They visited Walmer Castle Gardens for some inspiration, and have now planted vegetables and flowers that they will continue to care for next term.



LIFE SKILLS AND PSHE

This term the pupils in year 9 have been learning about the importance of foodbanks and the amazing work they do in providing essential food and household items for those in need. We decided as a class that we should organise a coffee morning to raise money so we could help out. The pupils were responsible for all aspects of the café including service, food preparation and washing up. In total we raised almost £60 which was used to purchase some of the important items needed by the food bank. Pupils visited a local supermarket and were responsible for finding the items themselves, whilst making sure they stayed within our spending budget. Once the items were purchased, they were taken back to school, packed into boxes and then delivered to the local Foodbank drop off point in Deal.



World Book Day 2025

The whole school took part in loads of fun activities throughout the day including a workshop by Stewart Ross, a published author, writing and planning a ghost story and themed activities relating to the books pupils are reading this term.



English

Year 8’s have had a brilliant term learning all about WW1 and reading Private Peaceful. For World Book Day we dressed as army officers and did army drills! The class wrote an amazing horror story too.

Year 10’s have been doing lots of exam prep and learning more about how we impact the world around us. They have presented on eco topics and shared different ways to help combat climate change.

Year 11’s GCSE have been completing literature revision and checking understanding of A Christmas Carol and Romeo and Juliet. They have done some exam revision for Language too.



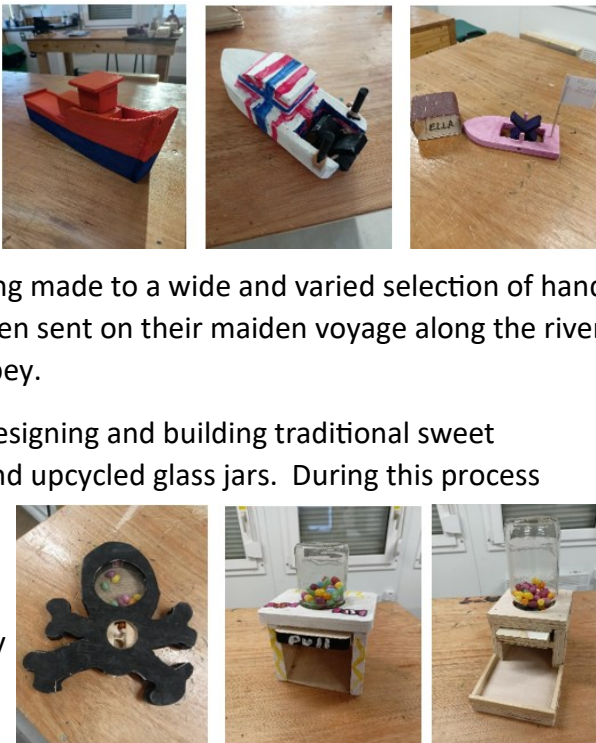
Year 7 were able to visit Canterbury to watch the unveiling of a statue of Ahra Behn by Queen Camilla. In English they wrote a recount of their experience.



DOWN IN DT

The DT department has been busy this term with the finishing touches being made to a wide and varied selection of hand-built boats. These were then sent on their maiden voyage along the river Stour within Kearsney Abbey.

Pupils then moved onto designing and building traditional sweet dispensers using timber and upcycled glass jars. During this process pupils were able to use the pillar drill and fret saw to achieve their intricate designs. These were finally painted or varnished.



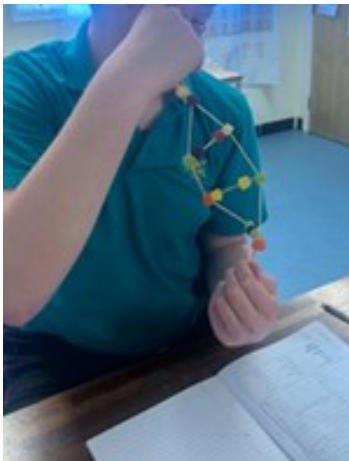
COOKERY CORNER

Another busy term in cooking. Pupils have created and cooked a wide range of dishes. We have looked at Japanese cuisine, all pupils have cooked Katsu curry with great success, and tried Japanese sweets and snacks including dried seaweed (nori) which some pupils loved despite the very salty taste.



SCIENCE

Year 9’s created models of a DNA double helix in their Science lesson recently, before successfully extracting some DNA strands from a banana. If the CSI unit ever need some help, they know where to come!



Football Match Recap

Learning Opportunities vs Sallygate



On a crisp, action-packed morning, two enthusiastic teams, Learning Opportunities and Sallygate, faced off in an exciting football match.

After three intense 10-minute games, the final score stood at 6-3 in favour of Sallygate. It was a game full of standout moments. Ella's excellent block was a highlight, she was spotted preventing several potential goals from the opposition. Tom was relentless on the field, always running and stealing the ball from players at every opportunity. Jacob, though smaller than some of his opponents, showed immense courage as he tackled players twice his size, giving his team a fighting chance.

One of the most notable performances came from Rose, whose confidence grew tremendously throughout the games. She tackled any player in her way, and on one memorable occasion, she stole the ball from an opponent, performed an incredible on-the-spot turn, and took it past a player before passing it down the line. It was a display of skill and determination that added to the team's energy.

Offensively, Oliver, Jayden, and Evie shone brightly, scoring three well-earned goals. The trio's timing and precision in front of the net were impressive and kept the pressure on Sallygate throughout the game.

In a true display of teamwork, Oliver, Jayden, and Jax also took turns as goalkeepers, each making some incredible saves to keep their side in the game.

As the match progressed, Learning Opportunities adapted their game strategy. They started off defensively in the first match, but by the final game, they were playing with greater attacking confidence and better coordination. Their improved ability to mark players and create space when they had the ball showed great development as a team.



The match ended on a high note, with both teams shaking hands in a true display of sportsmanship.

On the way back to school, the fun continued. The team stopped at the park to play tag and more football, before enjoying some well-deserved ice cream to wrap up a morning filled with sportsmanship and fun. A great morning of football and team spirit!



BELIEF WEEKS

At Learning Opportunities, learning about different faiths and religions supports our work to prepare students to understand and appreciate diversity and difference. Religious Education aims to give pupils opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs and to contribute to the development of their own beliefs and values. Everyone has their unique view of the world and Religious Education is about exploring these views. We deliver Religious Education through faith and belief weeks 6 times each year.

This Term students in KS3 have learnt about The Hanami Festival. This custom dates back to ancient times and is linked to Shintoism and aspects of Buddhism. Pupils created cherry blossoms (Sukura) from tissue paper and tried their hand at origami.



Top
Tips

Social Interaction Skills



Social interaction involves a complex set of skills.

Successful interaction involves being able to use eye contact and facial expression, paying attention and listening, understanding what someone is saying, taking turns and interpreting social cues eg: interest, confusion, offence. Expressively, successful communication includes being able to give the right amount of information, staying on topic and 'repairing' if communication breaks down.

An increasing number of 'unwritten' rules are involved in social interaction throughout the school years. These rules include how to be polite, knowing when to talk and when to listen, speaking in formal or informal styles to different people, when and how to change topics, and how to interrupt. Other areas that develop include, understanding and using non-literal language, inferring what someone might really mean, and understanding/using humour and sarcasm (afasic.org.uk)

For more support with any information on how to support Speech Language and Communication needs at home please refer to our website www.learningopportunities.org

