

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter



Autumn Term 1

Together towards success!

Dear parents and carers,

We've had a fantastic start to the school year, and it's been a joy to see the children settling in so well. New friendships are blossoming, and there's a real sense of community forming already.

Many of our students have been out on off-site trips, giving them wonderful opportunities to practise their social skills in real-world settings. We're incredibly proud of the excellent behaviour they've shown - our students truly are a credit to the school.

A big thank you to everyone who came along, donated, or baked for our Macmillan Coffee Morning. It was a great success, and so lovely to see so many parents—both familiar and new faces. We're excited to hold more events in the coming weeks, so please keep an eye out for upcoming dates.

Mr Mark, Miss Abbie, Miss Mwamba, Miss Amanda and Miss Leona



FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 4th November - Children return to school

Friday 5th December - CBL Reading Breakfast

Friday 12th December - Christmas Jumper Day

Thursday 11th December - CBU Christmas Dinner

Tuesday 16th December - CBL Christmas Dinner

Friday 19th December - Last day of Term 1 - 12:30pm finish

Croydon's Early Help Offer and Support for Families

There are a range of Early Help services for children, young people and families in Croydon. For more information click on the link below or contact a member of the leadership team who will be able to help you.

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/early-help-support/additional-early-help>

Mind in Croydon (supporting those with mental health concerns)

<https://www.mindincroydon.org.uk/>

Croydon Food Bank

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/croydon/>

Purley Food Hub

<https://www.purleyfoodhub.net/>

Family Lives (advice for parents)

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/>



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Yayoi Kusama Class



In Yayoi Kusama, we took a little while to settle into our new class and outside surroundings. We all love the outdoors exploring the sounds, smells and changes around us like weather.

In class we have learnt how to make a number. We look at the number and use cubes to show that number. We have been exploring less than, more than, greater than and fewer than.



We love cooking and have made lots of delicious food this half term. We have made vegan sausage rolls, chocolate chip cookies, flapjacks, cakes and fruit salads. In our last week we will be making cheese pins.



In history we are beginning to learn how things around us have changed like buildings and clothes thinking of our key words 'the past' and 'the present'.



We do our phonic lessons every day and practice our letter shapes and sounds. Some of us can write words with the sound of the day in and write lots of sentences too.



We learnt about Yayoi Kusama the very famous Japanese artists. She is a trailblazer because she invented the polka dot! Think how much her work has influenced so much today.



We are only at the beginning of our year but have packed in lots of fun ways to learn and look forward to much more over the coming school year.



Miss Claire, Miss Opal and Miss Laura

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Pablo Picasso Class



We have had an amazing start to the year in Picasso Class. We have done some amazing work! This half term was packed with great activities and experiences. In History, we have been looking at the Maya Civilisation and pupils learnt about what the Maya did and their own number system.

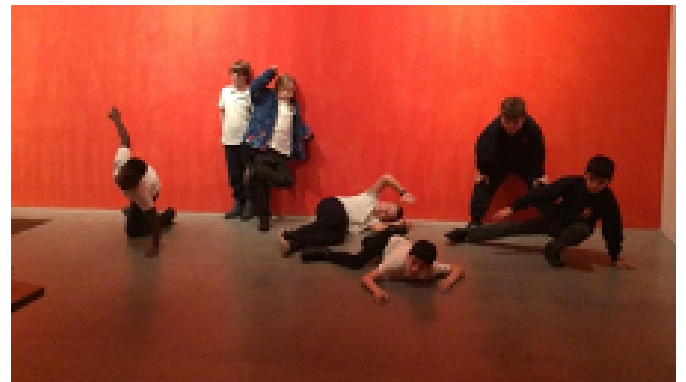
In English, we have read 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' which allowed pupils to create their own inventions, make their own chocolate bars and write their own chapters.

Our Science learning has been around grouping living things and pupils were able to complete classification keys.

To celebrate Black History Month, Picasso class created their own carnival masks which the class truly enjoyed.



Picasso class have been on a few educational visits to consolidate and expand on their learning. The visit to the Tate Modern allowed pupils to deepen their understanding of different artists around the world.



Mr Dan, Mr Omer, Ms Marion and Mr Jon are all very proud of the hard work, progress and accomplishments Picasso class have made this year. It has been a pleasure to work with them all, and to see their independence and maturity grow. We can't wait to see them continue to make progress!



Mr Dan, Mr Omer, Ms Marion and Mr Jon

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter



Claude Monet Class

This half term, Claude Monet Class have been exploring exciting new topics. In English, the children have loved diving into The Paper Bag Princess. Through sensory storytelling, drama, and freeze frames, they've brought the story to life while practising descriptive writing. Using colourful semantics, they've rewritten parts of the story and explored character traits - like the dragon, who is huge, scary, and breathes fire!

In Maths, they've focused on place value, counting forwards and backwards, and working with ones, tens, and hundreds using number deans and practical activities.



Science turned them into detectives as they investigated transparent, translucent, and opaque materials using magnifying glasses and torches. Some learners used Aided Language Boards to share their findings and ideas during these hands-on explorations.



In History, they travelled back to Ancient Egypt, creating 3D pyramids, flag collages, pharaoh headdresses, canopic jars, and writing their names in hieroglyphics.



Outside the classroom, weekly swimming sessions have built their confidence, and farm visits have allowed them to feed animals and explore the forest. The children have settled beautifully into school life, making this half term full of learning, creativity, and joy.

Miss Hoana, Miss Becky and Miss Sandra

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Henri Matisse Class



We have had a great start to the year in Henri Matisse Class.

We have been lucky enough to have Miss Ruta come to our class once a week to teach us art and we have been making collages just like our namesake Henri Matisse did!



In Maths, we have been learning about place value, looking at hundreds, tens and ones using dienes blocks. We know the value of digits and can order numbers in different sequences. We can also work out what 1, 10 and 100 more or less than a number is.

In science we have been finding out about what humans need to eat to be healthy and how humans move. We learnt about the different bones in our bodies and made our own skeletons out of marshmallows and sticks. Some of us ate our skeletons and some to them home to look after.

Our Geography topic has been learning about the different continents and oceans. The best lesson was when we tasted food from different European countries. We were not so keen on Greek feta cheese and olives but we loved the Belgian waffles, German frankfurters and Spanish chorizo.

Apart from our on-site lessons, some of us go horse riding at The Diamond Riding Centre, Carshalton.



We have enjoyed meeting the horses and the lovely people that help us. We were a little wobbly at first but the horses are gentle and fun to ride and our confidence is growing.

In our English lessons, we read 'The Paper Bag Princess' and we made our own princesses to go on our display board. It was a nice surprise to see the princess as the rescuer, with a mind of her own. We have also been looking at fables and talking about the lessons that they teach. 'The Lion and the Mouse' teaches us that the weak can help the strong and 'The boy who cried wolf' teaches us to always tell the truth.



All in all we have had a very good start to the academic year and we hope everyone enjoys their autumn break!

**Miss Angela, Miss Sally, Mr Sam
and Miss Jaye-Leigh**

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Faith Ringgold Class

It has been a fantastic start to the new academic year in Faith Ringgold Class. In English, we have been learning about our class namesake, the inspiring artist and author Faith Ringgold, exploring her life through biographies and discovering how the Civil Rights Movement influenced her work. The children produced thoughtful writing and artwork that celebrate creativity, courage and equality. In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of place value, practising column addition and subtraction with larger numbers, and exploring prime numbers and factors. The class has also been working hard on multiplication, showing real determination and growing confidence.



In Science, our topic has been the human circulatory system. The children have learnt about the heart, blood and how oxygen travels around the body, and they especially enjoyed creating their own large scale blood vessels! Our Geography lessons have taken us on a journey through North and South America, comparing the landscapes, climates and cultures across both continents. It's been great fun learning about the different festivals and traditions across these continents.

During ICT, we have been learning about networks and blogging, discovering how information moves around the internet and how to share ideas safely online. We've started our own class blog to share our hard work and it's lovely to see how the class celebrates each other's successes.



In PSHE, we have focused on the Zones of Regulation, learning to recognise and manage our emotions with empathy and understanding. We have taken the time to learn about the different strategies.



We have also enjoyed exploring Mexican flavours in Cooking, making a range of delicious dishes as part of our "Taste of Mexico" topic. The class favourites were definitely the quesadillas and the chili con carne!

It has been a really lovely first half term in Faith Ringgold Class and we're incredibly proud of how the class have managed the transition into Year 6. We can't wait to see what the next half term brings!

**Miss Hannah, Miss Tiffany, Mr Cian
and Miss Nadine**

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Frida Kahlo Class

In PSHE, the children have been learning about hygiene, health, and safety. As part of this, we visited Savers, where the boys selected essential items for their very own wash bags at school. They picked a variety of products, including mouthwash, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand sanitiser, and handwash. The boys behaved exceptionally well during our walk to and from the shop. They demonstrated excellent listening skills, followed instructions carefully, and were polite to both members of the public and shop staff. We're very excited for the rest of our upcoming trips!



Throughout October, Chaffinch Brook has been celebrating Black History Month. The Frida Kahlo class has been researching influential figures such as Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., Mary Seacole, and Marcus Rashford. The children explored how these individuals have promoted equality and helped shape history. On 14th October, we celebrated Culture Day, where staff and students were invited to represent their heritage through traditional dress, food, or other cultural symbols. We enjoyed a delicious selection of traditional Caribbean dishes, including jerk chicken, rice and peas, plantain, and saltfish fritters. The children thoroughly enjoyed the day and found the experience both educational and inspiring.



On Friday 17th October, the Frida Kahlo class delivered their very first assembly as students of Chaffinch Upper! As a class, we researched the Hindu festival of Diwali, also known as the Festival of Lights. The boys practised their lines and discussed the importance of speaking clearly and confidently so the audience could hear them. They took turns explaining the story of Rama and Sita and how Diwali is celebrated around the world. The assembly concluded with a huge round of applause and lots of praise from both peers and teachers - a fantastic achievement!



**Mr Callum, Miss Nicci, Miss Jesse
and Mr Manny**

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Andy Warhol Class



As we come to an end of our first half term in Andy Warhol, we would like to share the achievements and exciting opportunities that have been taking place. In PSHE this term, Year 8 have been learning all about the importance of personal hygiene and how it contributes to their overall health and wellbeing. Pupils explored good daily hygiene routines, discussed why these habits matter, and thought about how to make responsible choices. To put their learning into practice, they visited Savers to choose and buy essential hygiene products, helping them build confidence in making practical, independent decisions to support their personal care.



In swimming lessons this term, Year 8 have been working hard on improving their front stroke and back stroke techniques. Through regular practice and encouragement, pupils have developed their skills and shown fantastic determination in the pool.



By the end of the sessions, many of them have grown noticeably more confident in the water, demonstrating better control, stronger strokes, and a real sense of achievement.



This month, Year 8 also celebrated Black History Month by visiting the Museum of Docklands, where they explored exhibitions that highlighted the stories, achievements, and contributions of Black communities throughout history. Pupils enjoyed seeing real artefacts and learning about the impact of Black history on London and beyond. Alongside this, as part of their history curriculum, they also studied the Black Death, gaining an understanding of how this significant event shaped society in medieval England.



Miss Jaine, Miss Louise and Mr Jaden

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter



Leonora Carrington Class

They have had a fantastic start to the year, settling in well and warmly welcoming students and staff. In October, they fully embraced Black History Month, confidently leading a whole-school assembly on culture, identity, and inclusion. During Cultural Day, they enjoyed exploring global traditions through food and discussion.



In PSHE, students visited Savers to practise real-life budgeting by purchasing hygiene essentials for school. They showed great maturity, made thoughtful choices, and represented the school with respect and responsibility throughout the trip.



In PE, students have tackled weekly fitness circuits with enthusiasm and determination. They've been learning to link different exercises to the muscular or cardiovascular systems. Their ability to apply the knowledge in practical sessions has been impressive, and their focus, effort, and teamwork continue to stand out. Well done, Year 9!



**Miss Yeti, Miss Thalia, Miss Michelle
and Mr Colin**

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Kara Walker Class

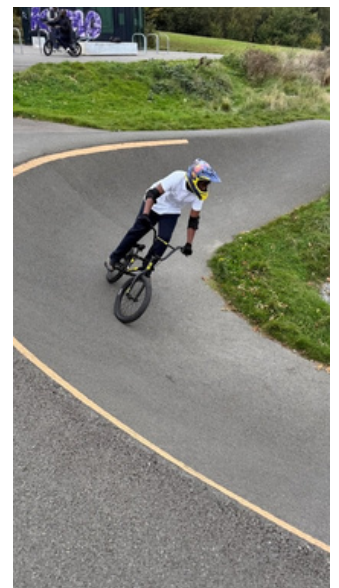
In late September, Year 9 students helped organise and run our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning. From baking cakes to designing posters Kara Walker class showed amazing teamwork and generosity and enjoyed the games and snacks for an eventful morning.



October marks Black History Month, and our class has taken part in a wide range of activities to honour Black voices and celebrate achievements throughout history. The class also got to indulge in a wonderful afro- caribbean meal cooked by Miss Yeti, Miss D'jate and Miss Sabrina to help celebrate this eventful month.



This term, Kara Walker class had the opportunity to take part in BMX biking lessons, pushing students out of their comfort zones and building new skills. The students were taught balance, control, and safety. It was great to see students challenge themselves and cheer each other on.



**Mr Emmanuel, Mr Curtis, Mr Yatana
and Mr Ragesh**

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Vincent Van Gogh Class

Vincent Van Gogh class has started Year 11 with a bang, diving right back into their studies. It has been a half term of learning about each other and themselves, focusing on goals for the future and how they can achieve them. Their goals range from improving their reading skills, to getting a part time job, and we know that they can achieve every single one. To achieve these goals, they've been engaging with external guests like the British Army and apprenticeship advisors. They've also been learning about different cultures, celebrating culture day and presenting an assembly on Diwali.



A massive highlight for them has been completing their BTEC Home school cooking award. The class worked hard with Miss Sabrina on their recipes, cooking their own dishes independently and serving them. They persevered through the practical and theoretical elements and made themselves and the school proud.

Their independence skills have further shone in the Science lab, where they have been undertaking practical activities, demonstrating safety around flames. The bunsen burners were a real hit. We are excited to see what the rest of the year has in store for our hardworking class.



Miss Keisha, Miss Clara and Mr Stephen

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Salvador Dali Class



This term has been a vibrant and positive start for Salvador Dali class, full of exciting learning and proud achievements. A special congratulations goes to Flo and Kenzo for earning science certificates from Ms Leona, recognising their creativity and hard work. Another proud moment was our heartfelt Macmillan assembly and tea party, where we raised money and awareness for a very important cause.



Alongside their learning in Maths and English, the class has really shined in physical activities including Gym, PE, and weekly Sailing sessions. Students have built new skills in sailing and shown great teamwork and resilience in fitness challenges. A standout success was the football tournament, where the team – made up mostly of Dali class – showed brilliant sportsmanship and secured second place. Go team Chaffinch!



To celebrate Black History Month, our theme of “Power and Pride” came to life with an incredible Culture Day. Pupils enjoyed music, dancing, storytelling, and delicious traditional dishes from West African and Caribbean cultures. A fun guessing game about the origins of the food led to great conversations about heritage. It was a joyful and meaningful day to end a fantastic first half-term.



**Miss Joy, Miss Sabrina, Mr Jordan,
Miss Olivia and Mr Timi**

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Damien Hirst Class



The academic year is well underway and our focus across all core subjects remains firmly on GCSE examination preparation. The Damien Hirst staff team are all very pleased with the attitude displayed by the class towards their learning.

In English, the students have been diligently preparing for both Paper 1 and Paper 2. A significant part of this preparation has involved mastering the identification and analysis of various language techniques and structural techniques. In Maths, the students have been covering a wide variety of topics, all chosen to reinforce core knowledge and practice the problem-solving skills necessary for their upcoming GCSE Maths papers. In Physics, the Year 11 students have been making excellent progress. They have been immersed in understanding key concepts around energy and electrical currents as well as conducting practical experiments to solidify their knowledge. We're proud of the hard work and commitment the students have shown as they tackle increasingly challenging exam-style questions.



Beyond the classroom, the Damien Hirst class has participated in a fantastic range of activities and events, enriching their personal development and community spirit: British Army Visit, Black History Month and Cultural Day, Poetry Week, Macmillan Coffee Morning and Apprenticeship Workshop and Careers Advice sessions.



**Mr Jermaine, Miss D'Jate, Mr Sylvan
and Miss Umme**

Chaffinch Brook Newsletter



Black History Month:

A Month of Power and Pride

Together towards success!

This year, our school wholeheartedly embraced Black History Month with a series of vibrant and educational events centered around the theme: Power and Pride. The celebration began with a powerful whole-school assembly led by Class Leonora Carrington, setting an inspiring tone for the weeks ahead. Every class then delved into the lives of prominent and inspiring Black figures, both past and present, integrating their significant contributions to the UK into their lessons. Several classes took their learning outside the classroom with educational trips to the Dockland History Museum. These visits allowed students to explore historical events and deepen their understanding of the Black experience and journey in the UK. A true highlight was our always-popular Cultural Dress and Food Day! Students and staff alike came to school radiating pride, dressed in beautiful cultural outfits, bright colours, and even favourite football shirts. The fantastic day concluded with a wonderful tasting of delicious African and Caribbean food, lovingly prepared by our dedicated staff. We also took this opportunity to collect generous donations to support The Sickle Cell Trust.

Finally, our students showcased their incredible talent by writing creative and imaginative poems based on the 'Power and Pride' theme. Some focused on inspirational characters, while others drew from their own personal experiences. The wealth of talent displayed was extraordinary, and prizes were awarded to the most outstanding poems.

It was a truly memorable month of learning, celebration, and pride!



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Black History Month:

A Month of Power and Pride



Together towards success!

This October, we are proudly celebrating Black History Month, and the CBL Picasso and Faith Ringgold classes engaged in a vibrant art lesson focused on crafting carnival masks. The students jumped into the activity with great enthusiasm. With colourful strips of paper in hand, each child designed and embellished their masks, letting their imaginations fly. The atmosphere was great, and the pupils were really excited.

The results were nothing short of amazing! Each mask uniquely reflected our talented pupils' personalities and artistic skills. This hands-on experience not only sharpened their art skills but also enabled a spirit of teamwork among them.

A huge congratulations to all the pupils for their outstanding creativity and hard work!



Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Young Minds - Mental Health



Together towards success!

On Friday 10th October 2025, we joined people across the globe to celebrate World Mental Health Day, a time to raise awareness about mental health and the importance of looking after our emotional wellbeing. The day encouraged open conversations and helped remind everyone that it's okay to not be okay.

As part of our activities, we supported the charity Young Minds, which works to improve the mental health of children and young people across the UK. Pupils took part in discussions and activities designed to promote self-care, kindness, and support for one another. It was a powerful reminder that mental health matters every day, not just once a year.

We're proud to share that, thanks to the kindness and generosity of our school community, we raised £50.15 for Young Minds. Every penny will go towards helping young people get the mental health support they need. A big thank you to everyone who took part and helped make the day such a meaningful one. Together, we're helping to break the stigma and encourage open conversations about mental health.



it's okay to feel



your feelings



Chaffinch Brook Newsletter

Story Stables



Together towards success!

Claude Monet Class has been attending the 'Story Stables' once a week. We have been reading the book *Wonky Donkey* and taking part in lots of fun activities related to the story. We have gone on walks through the woods looking for Roger the donkey, collected eggs from the chickens, fed the donkey's apples, created donkey collages using leaves found in the forest, and gone on a word hunt, finding words beginning with the 'd' sound! One of our favourite activities was taking part in a *Wonky Donkey* obstacle course which was so much fun!

