GRIMSDYKE NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF GRIMSDYKE SCHOOL

MESSAGE FROM *Mrs Bhudia*

Dear Parent,

It has been another busy and productive couple of weeks at Grimsdyke, with plenty happening across the school. As we approach the final few weeks of the autumn term, preparations are already underway for a number of exciting events and activities leading up to the Christmas break.

We look forward to sharing these special occasions with our school community and welcoming as many of you as possible to join us. Further information about upcoming events are shared with you via Abor communication, the school calendar and also in this newsletter.

Remembrance Observance

Last week, our whole school came together on the Junior School Playground for our annual Remembrance Observance. This was a meaningful opportunity for the children and staff to reflect on the importance of remembrance and to pay their respects to those who have served and sacrificed their lives.

Our Headteacher Prefects helped lead the observance, sharing thoughtful reminders about the significance of the poppy and why we continue to remember. The occasion concluded with a two-minute silence, accompanied by a moving rendition of The Last Post, performed by Mrs Tickner. Our Headteacher Prefects have also contributed their own reflections on this special occasion, which you can read below.



Odd Sock Day and Anti-Bullying Week – 16th to 20th November



We began Anti-Bullying Week on Monday 16th November by celebrating Odd Socks Day, with children and staff encouraged to wear odd socks to celebrate individuality, embrace differences and remind us that everyone is unique.

Throughout the week, assemblies and a range of activities provided opportunities for children to explore what bullying means, the different forms it can take and how to recognise it. An important focus was helping children understand the difference between occasional friendship disagreements or fallouts and bullying, which involves deliberate and repeated behaviour over time. We also explored the importance of speaking up, knowing who to turn to for support and recognising the role of '**bystanders'**. Children were encouraged to think about how they can become **'upstanders'** – individuals who speak out, seek help and take positive action when they witness unkindness or bullying.

Anti-Bullying Week has been an important reminder of our shared responsibility to create a school environment where everyone feels safe, respected, valued and included. These messages will continue to be reinforced throughout the year as part of our everyday school life.

Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day – Wednesday 9th December

We are looking forward to kicking off our festive celebrations at Grimsdyke with our Whole School Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day on Wednesday 9th December! Children are invited to come to school wearing their favourite Christmas jumper as we come together to enjoy a special festive lunch. Please do not feel you need to buy a new jumper. You can wear one from previous years or add some tinsel and baubles to make your own one. This is always a lovely occasion in our school calendar and a wonderful way to bring everyone together as we begin our exciting programme of Christmas events and celebrations. Please see the menu below and make sure you book meal choices on Arbor in advance.





Safeguarding update - School Attendance and Absences

Attendance and Punctuality

Good attendance and punctuality are essential in helping every child achieve their potential, make strong progress and benefit fully from everything school has to offer. At Grimsdyke, we aim for all pupils to **achieve 97% attendance or above,** wherever possible, recognising that there will be occasions when children are genuinely too unwell to attend.

Over the past week, we have seen an increase in pupil absence due to seasonal illnesses, which has impacted our overall school attendance. While we appreciate that children do become unwell, we would like to remind families of the importance of attending school regularly and returning as soon as they are well enough to do so.

It is easy to think that missing the odd day here and there won't make much difference, but lost learning adds up quickly across the school year:

- **97% attendance** equals around **5 to 6 days** missed over the whole year (roughly 30 hours of lost learning).
- **95% attendance** equals **9.5 days** missed—nearly two full weeks of school.
- **90% attendance** (classified as *persistent absence*) equals **19 days** missed—almost four whole weeks of classroom time lost.

The Impact on Your Child
In primary school, lessons build on one another daily, especially in core subjects like phonics, reading, and maths. When children are in school consistently, they:

- **Keep up with learning:** They don't miss vital building blocks or feel overwhelmed trying to catch up.
- **Build strong friendships:** Being part of daily routines and playtime helps children feel settled, secure, and connected to their peers.
- **Develop lifelong habits:** Punctuality and good attendance set a positive foundation for secondary school and beyond.

Reporting Absence
If your child is not well enough to attend school, parents and carers must notify us of the absence by emailing **attendance@grimsdyke.harrow.sch.uk** . Please provide your child's name, class and the reason for their absence **before 8.30am** so that the correct information can be recorded on the attendance register. Until we have received confirmation explaining the reason for an absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised. All medical appointments, school entrance examinations and ongoing illness or health related absences should be supported by relevant appointment confirmations or supporting documentation.

Punctuality – Every Minute Matters!
We have noticed an increasing number of pupils arriving late to school and would like to remind all families of our expectations:

- 8.30am - 8:45am: Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 8:45am. Both the Infant and Junior gates will close promptly at this time.
- After 8:45am: Any pupil arriving after 8:45am must enter through the main school entrance and will receive a late mark. We will contact families where we identify repeated lateness or concerns regarding attendance.
- After 9:00am: Pupils arriving after the attendance register has closed, without an authorised reason or where there is an **ongoing pattern of lateness**, will receive an unauthorised absence mark for the morning session.

Please make every effort to ensure your child arrives at school on time. Even a few minutes of lateness can mean missing important learning opportunities and the opportunity to settle calmly into the school day. We will continue to monitor attendance and punctuality closely and will contact families where we identify repeated lateness or patterns of absence that require further discussion or support.

When Is My Child Too Ill for School?

We recognise that deciding whether your child is well enough to attend school can sometimes be difficult, particularly during the winter months.

The NHS and Department for Education have provided helpful guidance to support parents in making these decisions. For example, children with a mild cough or cold can usually attend school if they are otherwise well, whereas children with a high temperature should remain at home until it has resolved.

We encourage all parents to familiarise themselves with the guidance below:

Is my child too ill for school?

UK Government NHS

Does your child have a high temperature (38°C or more)? YES Keep them off school until it goes away. NO Follow the guidance below.

Your child can usually go to school with a mild cough or cold if they are otherwise well. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day and give them the reason.

Should go in	Should go in (let the school know)	Seek treatment before returning to school	Keep them off (at first)
A cough, cold or sore throat Fine with slight cough or common cold symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat or headache, as long as they're otherwise well and do not have a high temperature.	**Cold sores** Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.	**Impetigo** They'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.	**Ear infection** If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.
Threadworms Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.	**Conjunctivitis** Fine unless they are feeling very unwell. Seek advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.	**Ringworm** See your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.	**Measles** They'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.
	Head lice & nits You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.	**Scarlet fever** They'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.	**Vomiting & diarrhoea** Stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea due to illness for at least 2 days (48 hours).
	Hand, foot & mouth disease If they seem well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.	**Chickenpox** Keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.	
	Slapped cheek syndrome Once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. Let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.		

Feeling worried or anxious: It's normal for any of us to feel worried sometimes. We may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can sometimes make a child's worries about going to school worse. If your child is struggling, please speak to school as soon as possible to explore available help. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, you should contact GP or school nurse.

To find out more, search www.NHS.uk for the specific illness or infection, or 'Is my child too ill for school?'

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

Reception CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Last week in Literacy we read the story *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* We talked about why Little Bear was afraid of the dark and used this as a starting point for our Science learning about light and dark. The children enjoyed identifying different sources of light and exploring our dark "cave" using torches.

This week we have been reading *Owl Babies* and learning about different woodland and nocturnal animals. The children enjoyed retelling the story using props and were encouraged to use descriptive vocabulary such as 'swooped' to describe how Mummy Owl flew through the trees.

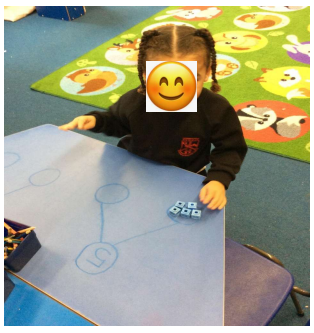
In Maths we have been learning about the numbers 4 and 5. The children explored different ways to make these numbers and used part-whole models to find number bonds to 5.

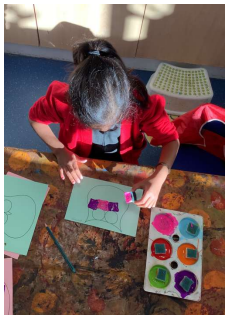
In PSED we have been learning about road safety. The children discussed how to cross the road safely and enjoyed role-playing this with their friends. We practised remembering to stop, look and listen before crossing the road.







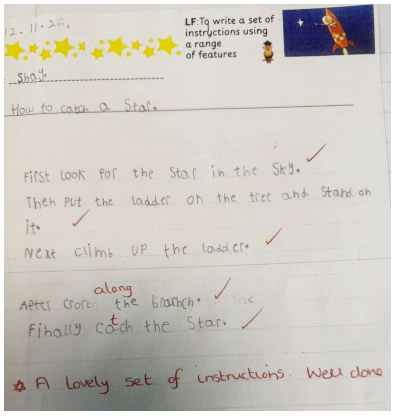





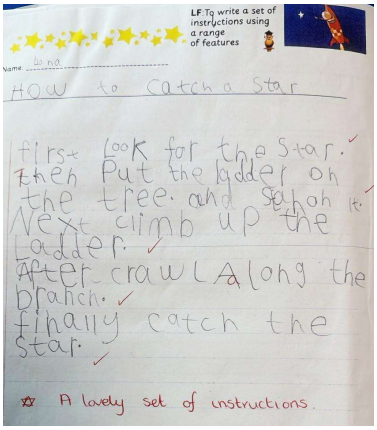
Year 1 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Over the past four weeks, our Year 1 children have been working hard on instructional writing! Using Oliver Jeffers' wonderful story '*How to Catch a Star*' as inspiration, the class wrote their very own set of instructions on how to catch a star. Their fantastic final pieces included clear titles, time adverbials, and bossy verbs, alongside brilliant use of capital letters, finger spaces, and full stops. Some children even challenged themselves to use the conjunction 'and' to extend their sentences!
We are so proud of their amazing writing progress.

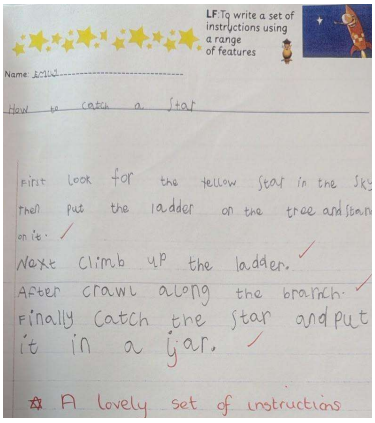
1D - Shay



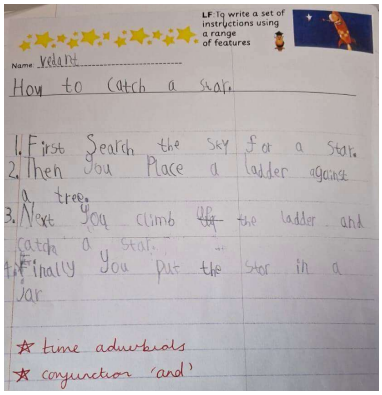
1D - Liana



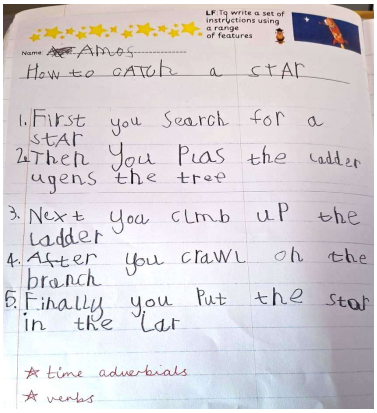
1D - Emily



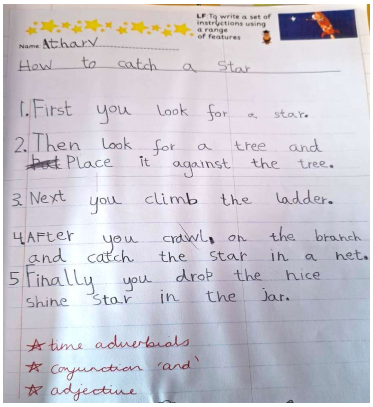
1K - Vedant



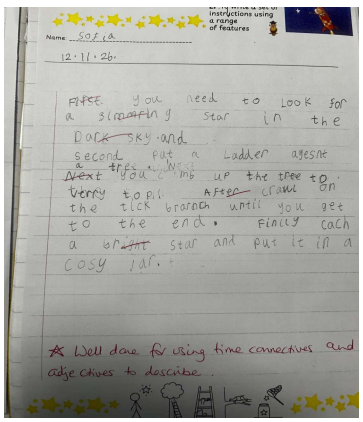
1K - Amos



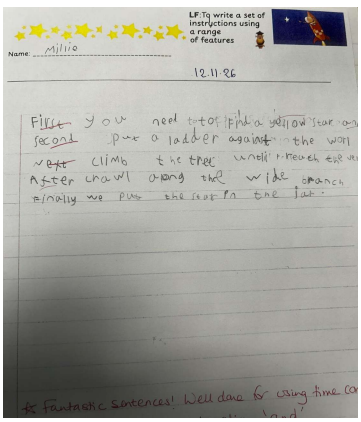
1K - Atharv



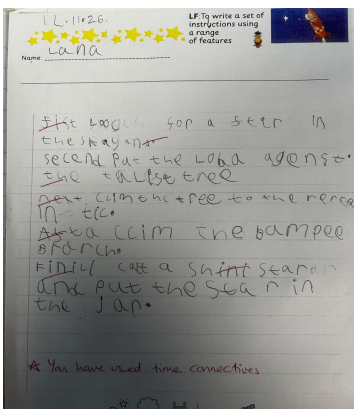
1M - Sofia



1M - Millie



1M - Lana



Year 2 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

We have really enjoyed the first three weeks of our new topic. The children have shown some excellent prior knowledge and enthusiasm whilst learning about The Great Fire of London.

In English, the children have been writing poems. We first created some firework poems using onomatopoeia, similes and expanded noun phrases. We have also been looking at the use of senses and alliteration in poetry with a focus on Poppies/Remembrance Day. They all tried so hard and did a fantastic job. This week we have been looking at the story 'Vlad and The Great Fire of London'. The children did an amazing job asking and answering questions in a drama activity.

In history, the children have really enjoyed finding out all about the Great Fire. They have looked in detail at Samuel Pepys, what caused the fire to spread and have now had a try at sequencing the events that took place.

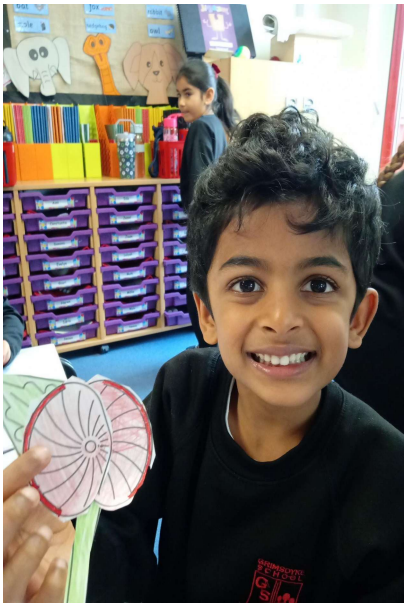
In maths, we have been continuing our work on column addition and have started learning about column subtraction. The children have been working really hard with this new skill, trying their best to exchange when adding and subtracting. In the final lesson, the children have been practising this week and even working out calculations to compare the answers.

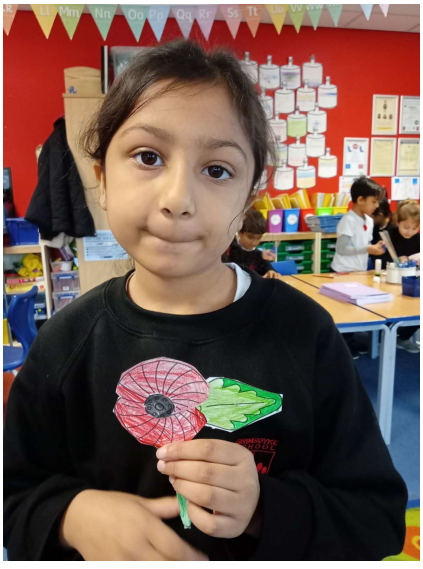
In DT, the children have been looking at houses through time and how the construction of houses has changed. In science, we have been learning about animals and their needs for survival. Concert practice has begun and the children have been working hard to learn their lines and their dances. In PE, the children have been working on ball skills using their feet.












Year 3 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

PSHE

In PSHE, we have been exploring conflict, discussing how disagreements can arise and the importance of resolving them respectfully. This week, as part of Anti-Bullying Week, we focused on the importance of kindness, respect and standing up for others. The children created their own anti-bullying pledges by drawing around their hands and filling them with positive messages and promises about how they can help make our school a kind, safe and welcoming place for everyone.







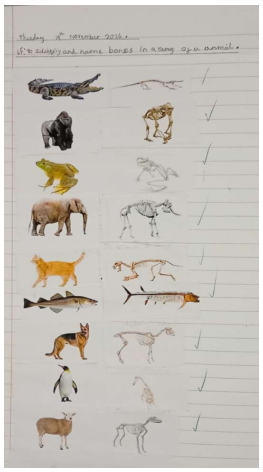




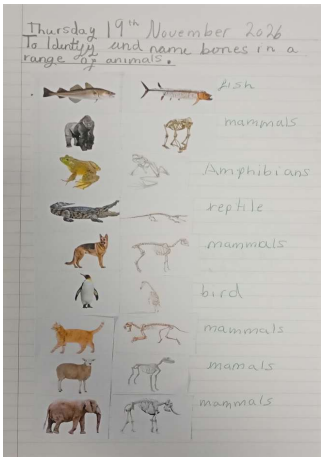
Science

In Science, Year 3 have been learning about the human skeleton and its important functions. This week, we explored the skeletons of different animals, identifying similarities and differences. The children also began to investigate how animals can be grouped and classified based on their skeletons.

3B



3H



3M



Year 4 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

SCIENCE - Sound

Year 4 explored how sound travels through different matter: solids, liquids and gases. We investigated this through some exciting hands-on experiments! We spoke through balloons and banged rocks together underwater - listening to the sound through an empty water bottle. We also discovered how vibrations travelled along a piece of string attached to a metal hanger when it was tapped against a table. We learnt that sound travels in waves with particles vibrating to carry sound to our ears, even through different materials.

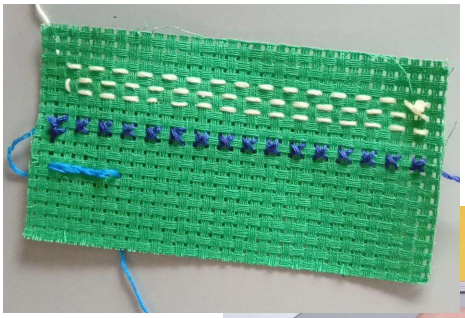
DT - Sewing

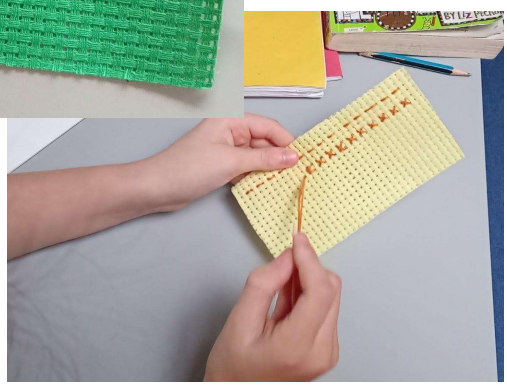
In our DT lesson this week, Year 4 revisited their sewing skills from year 3 in preparation for making their very own Viking pouches later this half-term. We practised our running stitch and cross stitch techniques before learning a new skill: the split stitch! This proved to be a little tricky, but the children showed fantastic patience, perseverance and resilience as they continued to develop their skills. We are very proud of their efforts and are now feeling more confident and well prepared for our Viking pouch creations!











Year 5 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

This week, Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed an exciting and immersive trip to Gunnersbury Park Museum, where they stepped back in time to discover what life was like during the Victorian era.

Throughout the day, the children were transported back to Victorian times and experienced life as a poor Victorian school child. They were introduced to some of the strict rules and rather shocking punishments that children would have faced at school during this period! Although they were certainly surprised by some of the expectations, they thoroughly enjoyed getting into character and playing their part.

During the second part of the workshop, the children took on a very different role as they trained to become Victorian servants in the kitchen. They discovered what life was like for the men and women who worked in service for extremely wealthy families, learning about their responsibilities, daily routines and the important roles they played within grand Victorian households.

It was a fantastic day full of historical discovery, hands-on experiences and plenty of opportunities to bring our learning to life. The children represented Year 5 brilliantly, and we hope they came away with a much deeper understanding of what life was really like in Victorian Britain!







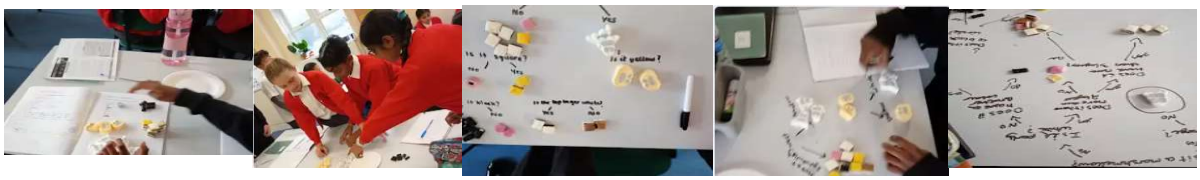






Year 6 CURRICULUM IN ACTION

The children have started a new science topic exploring animals and their habitats. This unit will develop their understanding of how animals can be grouped according to shared characteristics and the environments in which they live.To introduce the concept of classification, the children used sweets as practical resources. They examined the sweets carefully and organised them into groups according to observable features, such as colour, shape and size.



As part of the art unit, the children have been exploring the topic of 20th-century conflicts through the medium of lino printing. Children designed moodboards based on the topic to help design their lino print.



As part of the World War 2 day,children enjoyed the Crew workshop.From Wartime News to Music Hall moves, the wartime character took the children on a journey to the Home Front and back; showing just how the battles of World War 2 were won by the people at home and by the people of the Commonwealth as well.During the day, the children took part in other activities: baking shortbread and exploring cryptography. The children also explored cryptography by encrypting their own messages. They applied new knowledge, considered how information could be changed into a coded form and used logical reasoning to create and interpret messages.



PE, Sport and Physical Activity

It's Coming Home

We have a fantastic piece of news for us to share with you all. The Y5/6 Girls Football team were very successful at the competitive Harrow Cup, ending the day as **champions!**

The tournament was hosted on the Astroturf at Barnet Football Club, with 20 schools in total taking part. The schools were split into four groups of 5, with each team playing four group games. The girls got off to a flyer, winning 2-0, 5-0, 2-0 and 3-0 to ensure qualification to the Quarter Finals. Stanburn were beaten 3-0 at that stage before the girls repeated the scoreline twice more, first against Longfield in the Semi Finals and then in the Final against Whitchurch. The team didn't concede a goal, whilst Deeva scored 11 goals and Elissia got 9. 7 games played, 7 wins, 21 goals scored and 0 conceded. Top work! The girls will now go on to represent Barnet FC in the EFL Utilita Cup. Well done to Mia, Jaya, Jayna, Elissia, Esmee, Deeva, Caitlin and Grace.

Group C

	Team	PLD	PTS	GD
1	Grimsdyke	4	12	12
2	St John Fisher	4	9	3
3	Weald Rise	4	6	-2
4	Kenmore Park	4	1	-4
5	Pinner Park	4	1	-9

Match E4	4
Grimsdyke	3
Stanburn	0

Match E6	2
Longfield	0
Grimsdyke	3

Match E7	1
Whitchurch	0
Grimsdyke	3









Calendar 2026 - 2027

Date	Event
Mon 23rd Nov	4K Visiting Wembley Stadium
Mon 23rd Nov	Y5/Y6 Cross Country (selected only)
Tues 24th Nov	4A Visiting Wembley Stadium
Tues 24th Nov	Y5/6 Netball Tournament (selected only)
Wed 25th Nov	4T Visiting Wembley Stadium
Thurs 26th Nov	6G & 6M Visiting Battle of Britain Bunkers
Fri 27th Nov	6D Visiting Battle of Britain Bunkers
Tues 1st Dec	Reception Christmas Performance (Afternoon) 13:45
Tues 1st Dec	Jolly Jar Competition Entry - Deadline
Wed 2nd Dec	Y4 Winter Concert at HEHS (selected only)
Thurs 3rd Dec	Reception Christmas Performance (Morning) 9:30am
Thurs 3rd Dec	Y5 Victorian Theme Day
Sat 5th Dec	FOGS Christmas Fair
Mon 7th Dec	Year 1 Christmas Performance (Afternoon) 13:30pm
Tue 8th Dec	Year 1 Christmas Performance (Morning) 9:30am
Wed 9th Dec	Christmas Lunch & Christmas Jumper Day
Fri 11th Dec	Christmas Carol Concert at St Anselms Church. **Y6 Parents only.**
Mon 14th Dec	Year 2 Christmas Performance (Morning) 9:30am
Tues 15th Dec	Year 2 Christmas Performance (Afternoon) 13:30pm
Fri 18th Dec	Last day of Autumn Term - school closes at 2:30pm. No clubs running.
21st Dec - 3rd Jan	Christmas Break
Mon 4th Jan	Professional Development Day (Children NOT in school)
Tues 5th Jan	Back to School
Tues 19th Jan	Y6 Visiting the Wallace Museum (1 Class)
Fri 22nd Jan	Y6 Visiting the Wallace Museum (2 Classes)

Please note that all calendar dates are available on our website.