



Edwinstree Curriculum Newsletter Spring Term 2026

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Maths:

Year 5: Year 5 continue to work hard at Edwinstree. Following completing the topics **Multiplication and Division A** and **Fractions A**, the spring term continues with the topics **Multiplication and Division B** and **Fractions B**. This gives the children a chance to consolidate the skills with greater depth, and to learn new skills on their journey towards Year 6.

Year 6: Year 6 are moving forward well through the maths content on their final push towards SATs. Their progression from the November SATs to the mock SATs has been promising. The spring term topics have been **Ratio**, **Algebra** and **Decimals**. The remaining topics before SATs are **Fractions, decimals and percentages**, **Area, perimeter and volume**, **Statistics**, **Shape** and **Position and direction**. These remaining topics mostly consolidate what they already know with a few new skills added. The home learning CGP booklets are an important and helpful way to support your child with their learning, so we would encourage revisiting the booklet little and often. The maths team are available should you have any queries.

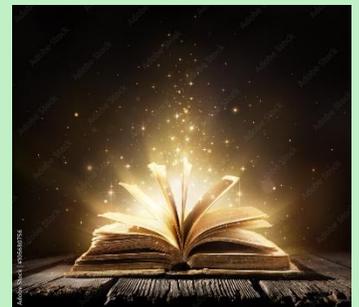
Year 7: Year 7 continue well into Key Stage 3, consolidating their Year 6 learning and moving forwards with new learning. This term's topics are **Graphing data**, **Fractions, decimals and percentages**, **Directed number**, **Fractions and percentages of amounts** and **Perimeter and area**.

Year 8: Year 8 is the last year before moving to the next school, and we work closely with schools like Freman to ensure the children arrive at their next school with the appropriate knowledge. This means a big push by the year 8 team to consolidate existing knowledge, and teach any new skills required as they move towards their GCSEs. The topics covered in the spring term are **Area, volume and density**, **Equations and inequalities**, **Percentages**, **Indices**, **Standard form** and **Interpret and represent data**.



English

Year 5: In English, Year 5 have been exploring a wide range of genres and texts while securing key grammar skills along the way. We have written diary entries inspired by *Treasure Island*, crafted newspaper reports based on *Tuesday* by David Wiesner, and created postcards and letters influenced by *Coming to England* by Floella Benjamin. Through these units, the children have been developing important grammatical knowledge, including the use of relative clauses, accurate dialogue punctuation, and constructing complex sentences.



Moving forward, Year 5 will be developing their narrative skills by writing retells based on *Hermelin* by Mini Grey and *The Whale* by Ethan and Vita Monroe. They will also be expanding their non-fiction writing through non-chronological reports inspired by *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell. It has been a wonderfully creative and productive term, with lots more exciting writing to come!

Year 6: Our reading focus for the end of the autumn term was *Christmas Carol* with which we practiced identifying word meanings in context. We then went on to write our own version of a short scene from the book, focusing on using varied sentence structures and ambitious vocabulary.

This term we have been learning about the features of an explanation text by reading examples and inventing our own machines to write about. The main GPS features which have been covered during this unit have been relative clauses, fronted adverbials and subordinate conjunctions. The students have sat their mock SATs exams and have had the opportunity to look through the papers as a class and we continue to revise previously taught GPS topics to ensure the learning has stuck.

Year 7: We have been reading the exciting novel *Trash* in Year 7 this term, which offers students a window into a world that is very different from their own: the life of children working on a huge waste site in the Philippines. They will be using the novel as inspiration to write their own unpleasant setting descriptions using the senses, and to create tension in their narrative writing.

Year 8: In Year 8 we have been reading the ever-popular dystopian novel *The Hunger Games*, which the students have really enjoyed. The students are exploring what makes a dystopian novel – a novel set in a bad or unfair society in which there is a lot of suffering. They will also be creating their own dystopian settings, and using these as the basis for a dystopian narrative.

Science

Year 5

This term, Year 5 have been exploring forces in depth, building on the foundations laid during our visit to Duxford. Through a series of hands-on investigations, pupils have strengthened their understanding of gears, levers and pulleys, and how these mechanisms help us make work easier.

We are now moving on to a new topic: the properties of materials. Over the coming weeks, pupils will take part in a range of practical enquiries to test and compare materials based on their uses and characteristics.

Year 6

This term, Year 6 have been developing their understanding of the human body. We began by exploring the digestive system, learning how each organ plays a role in breaking down food and absorbing nutrients. Pupils then moved on to study the circulatory system, discovering how the heart, blood and blood vessels work together to transport oxygen and vital substances around the body.

Our next unit will focus on evolution and inheritance. Pupils will investigate how living things adapt to their environments, how characteristics are passed from parents to offspring, and how scientific ideas from Darwin have shaped our understanding of the natural world.

Year 7

We have recently completed their Physics unit on Forces. This topic challenged pupils to think critically about the forces acting around us every day, how these forces can be measured, and the ways they influence objects and living things. Our work on pressure led to thoughtful discussions about how pressure changes with depth in the ocean and height in the atmosphere.

Our next learning journey takes us into Biology. We will begin by deepening our knowledge of the musculoskeletal and digestive systems before moving on to explore the science behind human reproduction.

Year 8: We have been delving deep into Science this term with the Earth's structure and Motion. Students have been engaging with working Scientifically within these topics, embedding Science investigation skills to ensure they are Freman ready. Students have also been looking at how to approach GCSE style questions to give them the best platform for the next stage of their learning journey. We are going to be looking at respiration and photosynthesis after half term.

Geography KS3

Year 7 have moved on to study 'Weather and Climate'. If you would like to support your child's learning at home, we always encourage parents to regularly watch or look at the weather within the UK and across the world. You could also enjoy a spot of cloud identification with your child when they become meteorologists for a week (watch out for this home learning on satchel one in the coming weeks).

Year 8 have continued their study of rivers and have successfully completed their second assessment. It has been incredible to watch the students take on a wholehearted approach to the new revision techniques that have been introduced to them and use these in their independent learning. As teachers we have been incredibly proud of the rapid progress that many of the students have achieved during this second topic. We are now moving on to 'Global Hazards'. Keep up the good work Yr 8!

History KS3



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Year 7

This term in History, Year 7 have been studying medieval England, focusing on the Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt. Pupils explored what caused the Black Death, how it spread, and its significant impact on medieval society, including changes to work, living conditions, and beliefs. They then examined the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, looking at why people rebelled, key events, and what this revealed to us about power and inequality in medieval England.

After half term, Year 7 will move on to studying the Tudors, where they will build on this knowledge by exploring changes in monarchy, religion, and society during one of the most dramatic periods in English history.

Year 8

This term, Year 8 have been studying the Industrial Revolution, exploring how rapid industrial change transformed Britain's economy, cities, and society. Through a focused case study on the Whitechapel murders, pupils have examined the harsh realities of life in industrial cities, using the context of Victorian London to understand issues such as homelessness, extreme poverty, overcrowding, and the experiences of the most vulnerable in society. This has helped students develop a deeper awareness of social inequality and the challenges faced by working-class communities.

Next, Year 8 will move on to British Politics, where they will study the evolution of Parliamentary power over time. Pupils will explore key developments that have shaped democracy in Britain, from the early limitations placed on monarchs to modern political changes, culminating in a study of Brexit and present-day politics. This topic will support students in understanding how political power has changed and how historical decisions continue to influence life in Britain today.

Humanities KS2

This half term, year 5 and 6 have completed their Mighty Maya history unit. To round off the topic, they have learnt about the amazing achievements of the Maya people including water storage systems, rainforest medicines and a complex number system. They have also studied what happened when the Spanish conquistadors invaded the Maya lands and they have learnt about modern Maya people and how they live today.

They have now begun studying their new geography unit- Biomes. To begin the topic, they have looked at what geography is and why it is so important. They enjoyed learning about the Apollo 8 mission in 1968 when the Earthrise photograph (shown below) was taken. This was the first time humans had seen the Earth from this distance, and it sparked the beginning of the environmental movement. People realised that they had to learn about the Earth so that they could take care of it and protect the fragile blue sphere that we call home.



In this Biomes topic, they will be learning about a variety of different biomes but will focus on tropical rainforests. They will also look at how humans are changing and protecting biomes across the world. They will research different conservation projects across the world including #TeamTrees created by MrBeast with help from influencers like Mark Rober. Take a look at these Biomes videos from the BBC to support with learning in this topic: [Biomes: Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Geography - BBC Teach](#)



Life Skills

Below we show the different topics that are currently being studied in Lifeskills.



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
<p>How To Look After Myself And My Body</p> <p>Exercise Right, Sleep Tight I understand why getting enough exercise and enough sleep is important. Good night's sleep cards. Bedtime routine checklist Guided sleep meditation</p> <p>Taking Care of Our Bodies I understand how to take care of my body Self-care bingo Self-care checklist Healthy kids problem posts.</p> <p>Harmful Substances I understand the harmful effects of using drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. Basic substances are their effects. How do you feel about different substances eg age restrictions.</p> <p>How We Think and Feel About Our Bodies I understand what a positive body image is. Feeling good about ourselves How do stereotypes about the perfect body impact us? Body image, what's important?</p> <p>Healthy Choices I can make informed choices in order to look after my physical and mental health. "What choice would you make?" cards. Balanced lifestyle cards. Story - A healthy day in the life.</p>	<p>Safety First</p> <p>You Are Responsible I can take responsibility for my own safety. "Safe or risky?" cards Responsibility crossword</p> <p>What Are the Risks? I can assess and manage risks in different situations. Risk-o-meter in different scenarios Who could help?</p> <p>Making Your Mind Up I can confidently identify and manage pressure to get involved in risky situations. Risky situations - dealing with pressure scenario cards Group – will people admire you if do something risky?</p> <p>In an Emergency I can act sensibly and responsibly in an emergency. Different emergencies Health and Safety in School</p> <p>Home - Safe and Sound I can identify hazards and reduce risks to keep myself and others safe at home. Spot the hazards picture pack Safe House Action Plan</p> <p>Outdoors - Playing It Safe I know how to stay safe in different outdoor environments. Outdoor Risk Assessment Play It Safe Outdoors Crossword Fireworks Safety Poster (Bring forward to November) Hazards, Dangers and Risks Outdoors Photo Pack</p>	<p>Wellbeing and Substances</p> <p>Aspects of Wellbeing Zones of Regulation (Based on Inside Out film) What do each of the zones of regulation mean? Video clips - Sadness, Anger, Joy, Fear, Disgust. Memory orb or character study for emotions.</p> <p>Personality Islands What are some of your personality traits? Draw your Personality Island. Poem.</p> <p>Recap of the Different Zones Zones of Regulation Board Game</p> <p>Aspects of Wellbeing Wellbeing and the Teenage Brain MRI Scanning – How can we see inside the brain? What's happening inside the adolescent brain? The Hand Model of The Brain Endocrine system – controls hormones</p> <p>SUBSTANCES INTRODUCTION Hertfordshire and the UK Do children misuse substances? Do I know what we mean by substance use? What are the risks and effects of caffeine consumption? What is the impact of energy drinks? We will choose to look at one of the following in an introductory manner: Tobacco – risks and influences. Vaping – risks and influences. Alcohol - risks and influences.</p>	<p>Substances</p> <p>Introduction: Hertfordshire and the UK; Kahoot Do children misuse substances? Smoking/vaping data for UK. Vaping in Herts. Kahoot about Drugs</p> <p>Understanding Drugs Do I know what we mean by substance use? What are the risks and effects of caffeine consumption? What is the impact of energy drinks? Draw someone who uses drugs (stereotype). Caffeine scenario and Energy drinks reduction. What do energy drinks do to your body?</p> <p>Tobacco – risks and influences Can I understand and manage influences relating to tobacco and nicotine product use? Attitudes continuum. Risks of tobacco cards.</p> <p>Vaping – risks and influences What are the risks and effects of vaping? Timeline for a day. Consequences of vaping – environmental, health, legal.</p> <p>Alcohol Risk What are the risks and consequences of alcohol use? Short-term and long-term risks of drinking alcohol What influences us to drink alcohol? Alcohol units. Kahoot – Alcohol quiz.</p> <p>Substances and the Law Substances - What is allowed and when? Introduction to other drugs. School rules about substances. Is this situation legal or illegal? Drugs Quiz</p>

RE

KS2:

Y5 have begun to look at Sikhism and have recently done some excellent artwork portraying the 3 pillars of Sikhism. They will get to be hands on looking at the 5K's of Sikhism later this term.

Y6 Are beginning to look at Judaism and have just considered what commandments they would want Edwinstree to have- an interesting read! Later this term they will sampling Matzos and considering the symbolism in food.

KS3

Y7 have been completing their assessments on creation and will shortly be starting their unit on Jesus- we consider who he was and who he is today. We look at issues with religion, such as examining the image of Jesus that was shot, by a pellet gun, at St.Albans Cathedral.

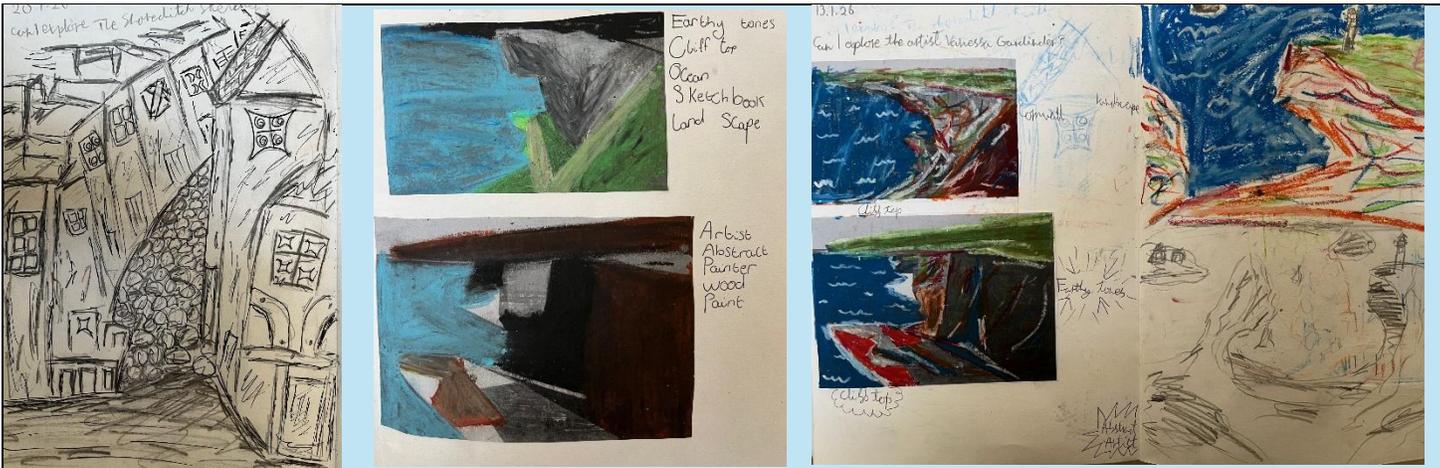
Y8 have begun their unit on the Holocaust and Islamophobia - we have begun to consider why we learn about topics such as this and they have shown real emotional maturity so far.



Art

Year 5: We have been busy completing our topic about Shape, Line and Colour and creating abstract portraits in the style of Picasso using cardboard. We are now learning about Landscapes and the Natural World. So far, we have created concertina landscapes using collage, pen and watercolour. We have also studied the artists The Shoreditch Sketcher and Vanessa Gardiner.





Year 6: We have completed our topic about 'Identity', please see some awesome self portraits in the style of Mike Barrett. We have now started our new topic 'Still Life' where we began with some observational studies. Soon we will be making our clay tiles inspired by Cezanne and our own drawings.

Can I create observational drawings using colour, texture...

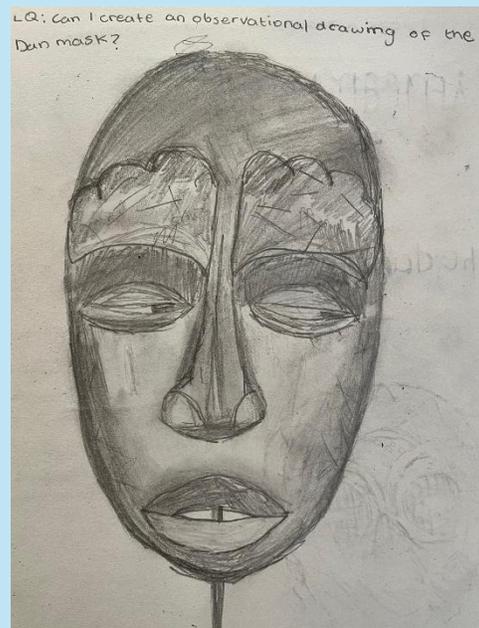
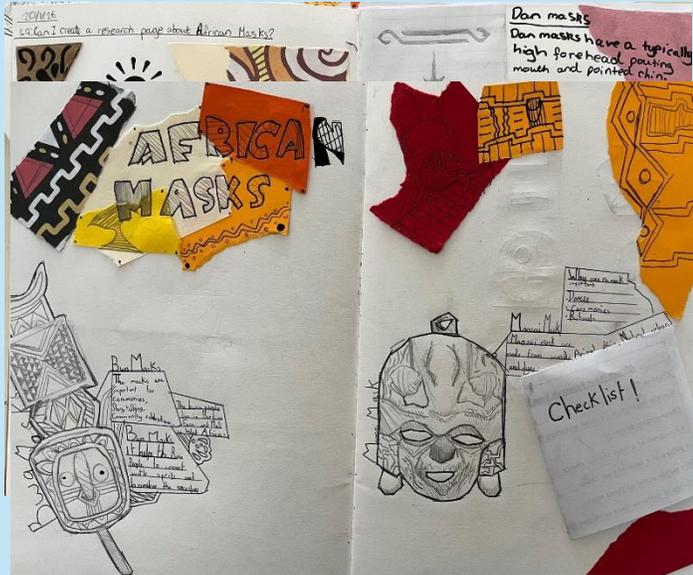


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Can I create observational drawings using colour, texture and line?

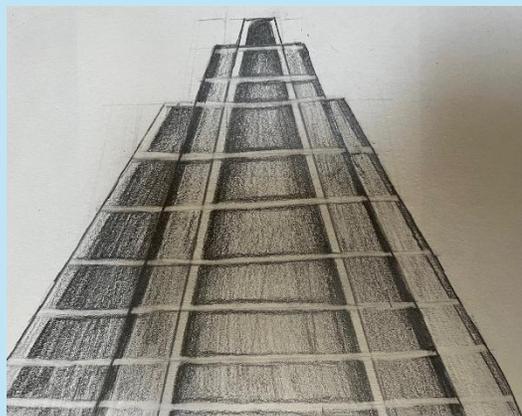
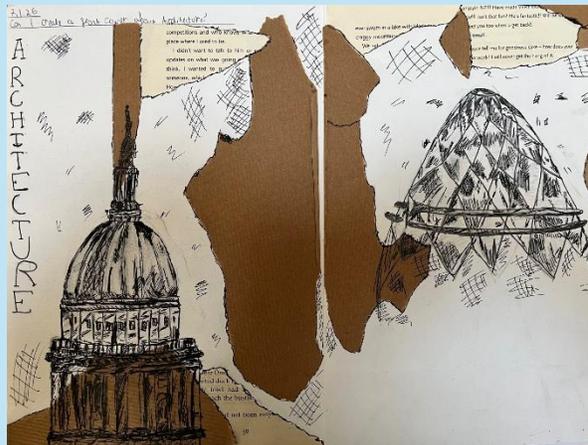
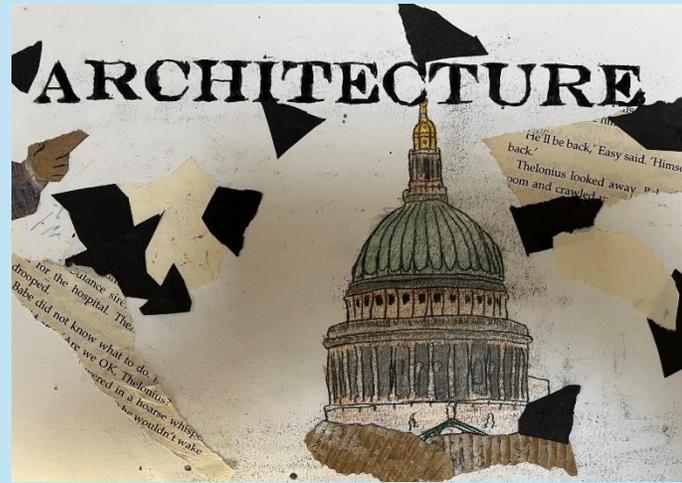


Year 7:

Year 7 have just completed their unit of work titled 'Objects'. Please see below for some final art works inspired by Michael Craig Martin as well as colour theory. We are now learning about African Art and have started with some observational studies and research pages about African Masks.



Year 8: Year 8 have completed their 'Food' project with some drawings inspired by Sarah Graham. These used a range of materials as well as tone, shape, texture and space. We are now learning about Architecture and have created some brilliant research pages as well as perspective drawings. We are currently learning about the artist Ian Murphy and using him as inspiration for our final pieces.



Technology

Food & Nutrition

Please see the school newsletter for weekly updates and key information in this subject.

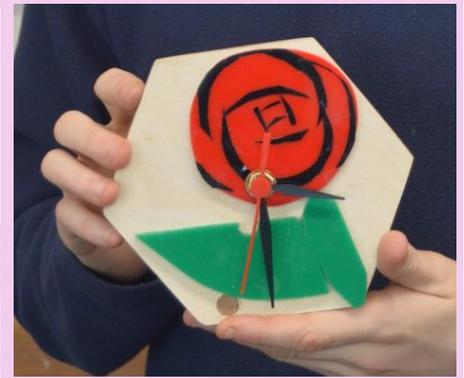
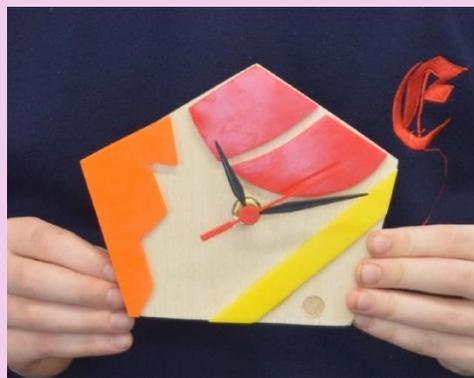
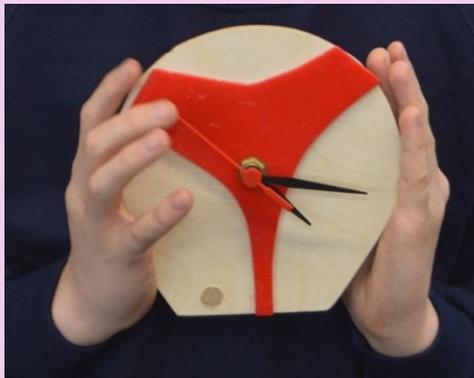
Year 5 Resistant Materials

Year 5 had a fantastic time racing their sledges. They worked tirelessly to get through some precarious moments during each race, even the spectators on the edge of their seats! The students used their newfound vocabulary to discuss why and how the structures failed and were able to suggest improvements. It was delightful to see great success across all four tutor groups and well done to the winning teams. Can the next round of students beat the leading result of 10 bricks, 54 metres in 6 minutes.



Year 6 Resistant Materials

There were some amazing clocks completed by **Year 6**. The clocks complemented the theme chosen by each student and all were completed successfully.



Year 7 Textiles

It has brought great joy to witness how proud the **Year 7** students have been with their finished cushion covers and quite rightly so! The cushions are amazing and have incorporated a whole range of techniques including applique, fabric paints and embellishments. Well done Year 7!



Year 8 Resistant Materials

Year 8 has continued to embed the key practical skills needed for their start to Freman. They have been busy creating their light sensing circuits and completing the final assembly of the mood lights. All have been completed with success and display a good standard of precision and finish.

French

French KS2: Continue to familiarize yourself with the French and Italian language and culture in a fun way using this website: [KS2 French - BBC Bitesize](#)

KS3: Practice the vocabulary and grammar you have been studying in class with <https://www.languagesonline.org.uk/>



Drama (Y7)

Before half term, Year 7 students worked with **Open Scripts**, short scripts with no character details or stage directions. This encouraged creativity, discussion, and experimentation as students made their own choices about characters and situations.

This half term, students are exploring **Silent Movies**, learning about performers such as *Charlie Chaplin* and *Marcel Marceau*. They are using movement, facial expression, and physical comedy to create short scenes based on familiar characters like the hero and the villain.

The unit also focuses on teamwork and confidence. Working in different groups helps build **friendship** and **trust**, while carefully structured activities support students who find performing to an audience challenging. Students are encouraged to show **endurance**, be creative, and support one another in a safe environment.



Music



Year 5 – In Year 5 this term, students have been exploring the "Instruments of the Orchestra" in music. They will be learning about the four main sections of the orchestra: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The children will be listening to different instruments, identified their sounds, and discussing how they work together to create music in an orchestral setting.



Year 6 – In Year 6, students have been focusing on melody writing in music. They've learned about the key elements of a melody, such as pitch, rhythm, and structure, and have been composing their own short melodies.



Year 7 – In Year 7, students have been learning about African drumming. They've explored traditional rhythms, techniques, and the cultural significance of drumming in African communities. Students have developed their rhythm skills and learned how to work together to create complex and dynamic drum patterns in whole class and small group ensemble work.



Year 8 – In Year 8, students have been exploring film music. As part of this topic, they have had the opportunity to perform and compose their own pieces of film music, using YuStudio—a digital music platform. They’ve worked with a variety of film clips and composed original soundtracks to go with them, incorporating pre-written loops, as well as their own music. They will also be studying Minimalist music.

Computing –

Year 5 have started well with their computing topics, and continue to progress well through the curriculum. Their current topic is **Scratch** – this can easily be practised at home on almost any device. Click on the logo below to take you to the **Scratch** website:



Year 5’s next topic will be **Vector Graphics**. This is the creation of pictures using different types and sizes of shapes. These skills can be explored at home in a wide range of apps, but the children will be using PowerPoint. However, any drawing app that can generate shapes is suitable.

Year 6 have continued well from year 5, consolidating and progressing from the skills they learned. They are currently completing a topic about **creating 2D-shapes** using Scratch. This can easily be practised at home on almost any device. Click on the logo below to take you to the **Scratch** website:



Their next topic will be **Computer Networks**, learning about different types and sizes of network such as the internet, and local area networks found in many homes and workplaces. This will include both the hardware used to create physical networks, and the software and protocols used to manage and access the networks.

Year 7 are moving through the curriculum content well, building upon the knowledge gained from Year 5 and Year 6. Their first topic, **How a computer works**, is now complete. This topic showed the children which hardware and physical parts a computer is made of, and how these parts worked individually and together to make the computer work. Their latest topic is **Vector Graphics** building upon the similar topic from year 5. This involves making pictures from different types and sizes of shapes. They are using some software called **Inkscape**. This is a free, online graphics editor available from the link in the picture:



Year 8 have continued with their topic **Data Representation – Images and Sound** started just before Christmas. This topic looks at how images and sounds are stored on a computer, and the processes needed to change the format between analogue and digital. For example, human ears cannot hear digital 1s and 0s, so they need to be converted into an analogue sound wave using a DAC (digital to analogue convertor), a component present in almost every modern device. They are currently using software called **Audacity**, available as a download from the following link:



The next topic introduces them to Python, a very popular and versatile programming language. There are many tools online to practice Python. You can visit <https://www.python.org> for an introduction.