



Edwinstree Curriculum Newsletter Summer 2026

[Click on the subject to take you to each section](#)

[Maths](#), [English](#), [Science](#), [Geography KS3](#), [History KS3](#), [Humanities KS2](#),

[Life Skills](#), [RE](#), [PE](#), [Art](#), [Technology](#), [French](#), [Drama Y7](#), [Computing](#)

Maths:

Year 5: Year 5 are close to the end of a good year at Edwinstree. We move into the final topics for the year – **Shape**, **Negative Numbers**, **Converting Units** and **Volume**. During the term we will also be completing some baseline SATs tests to help us plan the teaching once they have transitioned into Year 6. There will be no expectation to 'pass' these tests as they have not been taught all the content. It will also give the children an early opportunity to see and experience what a SATs paper looks like. During the summer we would encourage all children to read, as this will help their progress in the problem-solving papers next year. Of course, making sure times tables are fresh in the mind will help to reduce the brain's workload when doing maths.



Year 6: Year 6 have worked incredibly hard this year, and their progress towards SATs has been phenomenal. Please reassure your children the results should not be seen as pass or fail, just an indication of how much progress they have made this year, whether they reach the 'Pass' mark or not. Following the SATs the children had a week of fun outdoor maths activities, as a reward for their hard work. For the last half term they will begin to look at some of the Year 7 topics, to give them an advantage when they return in September. Well done Year 6!

One additional piece of equipment needed for September is a ***scientific calculator***. We recommend the Casio ClassWiz CW+ series, specifically:

Casio fx-83GT CW+

Casio fx-85GT CW+

The only difference between the two calculators is the second is solar powered rather than battery powered. The price listed on the Casio website is £16.99 for the fx-83GT and £18.99 for the fx-85GT.

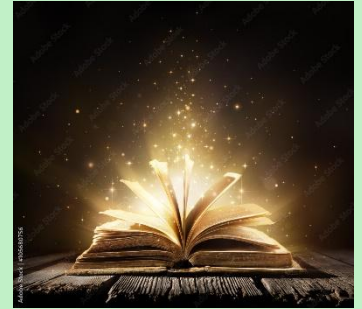
Year 7: Year 7 also come to the end of a good year. They are nearing the end of the scheme of work, with some material from **Speed, distance and time**, **Properties of number** and **Angles and polygons** left to do. Please could you ensure your child has the correct equipment for September, specifically a scientific calculator. We use them frequently during their work. Please refer to the Year 6 section for guidance.

Year 8: Year 8 are coming close to another, and last good year at Edwinstree. We liaise closely with Freman to ensure our teaching smoothly transitions into their Maths curriculum. The remaining topics for the groups to engage with are **Probability**, **Circles**, **Graphs and charts** and **Sequences**. We wish your children all the best on their transition to Freman or elsewhere.

English

Year 5:

This term, Year 5 have been immersed in *The Explorer*, using the text to inspire a range of engaging writing. They have brought a dramatic plane crash to life through diary recounts, developed practical survival guides for navigating the Amazon rainforest, and written their own narratives influenced by *The Promise* by Nicola Davies. Alongside this, we have been consolidating key grammar and punctuation skills in preparation for Year 6. They have focused on using relative and embedded clauses, as well as applying brackets, commas and colons accurately and effectively in their writing.



Year 6: We'd like to echo the message from the maths team about how proud we are of the students and the progress made in English this year. Everyone has worked so hard! As I write, we have just completed a month of writing ready for the assessments. Every four years Herts for Learning moderate our teacher assessments (this is a national expectation). Our two moderators were astounded how unique and wonderful our writing is – reflecting our school ethos beautifully.

Year 7: Year 7 are exploring the world of William Shakespeare this half term. They have been investigating Shakespeare's life and times, including his Globe Theatre, in preparation for their successful trip to London to explore the theatre and its history and take part in a drama workshop. Following this, they are now studying one of his most well-known tragedies, *Romeo and Juliet*, and investigating who is responsible for the death of Mercutio in the scene that gives rise to the famous quote, "A plague o' both your houses!"

Year 8: Having completed studying their second Shakespeare play at Edwinstree, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Year 8 are now exploring sinister tales with a twist. They are investigating two of Roald Dahl's short stories, *Lamb to the Slaughter* and *The Landlady*, and considering the morality, or lack of it, of the characters involved. They will also be writing their own short stories with a nasty twist in the tale.

Science

Year 5 have been thoroughly enjoying their science lessons, exploring materials. They have enjoyed carrying out exciting investigations on electrical conductors, solubility and states of matter with great curiosity.

Year 6 have been working hard on their unit about evolution and inheritance, showing excellent engagement and thoughtful scientific discussion. We are also looking forward to the upcoming educational visit to Whipsnade Zoo, which will enrich their learning further on the topic.

Year 7 have worked extremely hard this term and should be proud of the high level of achievement in their unit on the human body. The focus this term has been on reproduction and birth, and has been approached with maturity and interest, supporting their growing scientific understanding.

Year 8 have been enjoying the opportunity to focus on developing their lab skills with two revamped chemistry topics this term with some exciting new practicals, Acids and Alkalis and Chemical Reactions. This included neutralisation reactions, reacting metals and acids, testing gases and applying these new skills to solving mysteries using practical techniques. I have been incredibly impressed by commitment to learning and the progress made by the year 8 this term. They are continuing to embed these investigation skills fully to ensure they are Freman ready. Well done year 8

Geography KS3

Year 7 students have been busy studying the weather and climate topic. They have enjoyed becoming meteorologists; constructing weather measuring apparatus and using their new knowledge to carry out an investigation to test how our weather and climate is changing. This has involved weather observations, constructing climate graphs, analysing existing climate graphs to finally reach a conclusion.

Year 8 have delved into the realms of how great is Great Britain? The topic has focused on comparing our energy sources, industrial make-up and transnational companies with other countries around the world.

It has been a pleasure to teach KS3 Geography this year! Well done to you all from the Geography team!

History KS3



This term, Year 7 students have thoroughly enjoyed their study of the Tudor period. They have explored the rise of the Tudor dynasty and learned about the reign of Henry VIII, with a particular focus on his six wives and the impact his marriages had on England. Students have shown great enthusiasm during lessons, especially when investigating the dramatic events surrounding Henry's quest for a male heir and the changes this brought to the Church and the country. Building on their understanding of change and conflict in British history, Year 7 will now be moving on to study the English Civil War, where they will examine the causes of the conflict between King Charles I and Parliament and consider how this turbulent period shaped the future of Britain.

Year 8 students have been studying the history of British politics and the development of modern society. They have explored significant events and movements including the Liberal Reforms, the campaign for women's suffrage led by the Suffragettes, and the creation of the Welfare State after the Second World War. More recently, students have examined the changes brought about during Margaret Thatcher's time as Prime Minister and debated the impact of these policies on Britain. Throughout the topic, students have developed their understanding of how political decisions can shape people's lives and society as a whole. Next, Year 8 will begin an important unit on the Holocaust, where they will learn about the persecution of Jewish people and other groups during the Second World War, while reflecting on the importance of tolerance, remembrance and human rights.

Humanities KS2

Year 5 and Year 6 have recently begun their Local History topic, focusing on the town of Buntingford. As part of their learning, each class has visited the local library, where they explored a wide range of fascinating historical sources, including maps, aerial photographs, postcards and local guides.

The librarians were extremely impressed with both the children's excellent behaviour and their enthusiasm for learning. The pupils particularly enjoyed comparing maps from 1881 through to 2021, discovering how Buntingford has changed over time. They were intrigued to find that the town once had a railway line and really enjoyed trying to locate their houses on the maps!

Over the coming weeks, each class will take part in a 'History Hunt' walk around Buntingford. This will give them the opportunity to explore key historical landmarks, such as the cage and the one-handed clock, helping to bring their learning to life.



Year 6 will visit Whipsnade Zoo on Tuesday 7th July. Year 5 will now be visiting the zoo on Thursday 24th September due to a red weather warning in place when the trip was originally planned. This should be a great opportunity to see some of the animals that they studied in our Biomes topic last half term. A highlight will be the new baby elephant who was born on 8th June! [Baby elephant wants to play | Whipsnade Zoo](#)

Life Skills

For the last part of the year all year groups are looking at concerns around Artificial Intelligence Deepfakes using some new lessons from the PSHE Association.

In addition, just Key Stage 2 have had a visit from the NSPCC delivering their "Speak Out. Stay Safe" sessions and we have used this as an opportunity to consider aspects of safety as well as who we trust and who we can talk to.

In the last half-term we are delivering our Relationships and Sex Education lessons as outlined below.



Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	
Time To Change	Puberty recap	Puberty and emotional changes	Relationship values	
Menstruation and Wet Dreams	Puberty: Change and becoming independent	Menstrual wellbeing	Influences on Relationship Expectations	
Personal hygiene	Positive, healthy relationships	Healthy and unhealthy relationships	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	
Emotions and feelings	How a baby is made	Managing conflict	Consent – avoiding assumptions	
Keeping My Body Safe (incl. age appropriate FGM preventative education)	Consent KS2	Introduction to consent KS3	Sexting	
Boys Talk/Girls Talk on puberty		Body image	Pornography, Sexting and the Law	
		Keeping My Body Safe (incl age appropriate FGM preventative education)	Contraception/STI's	

RE

KS2

Y5 are considering “Who is Jesus?”- we recently looked at various images of Jesus around the world and considered why he is viewed so differently based on geographical location.

Y6 are looking at people of God- who were they? What did they do and did people listen? We spent a lesson considering the impact of Isaiah’s prophecy of turning weapons into tools then looked at the “arms into art” campaign in Maputo.



KS3

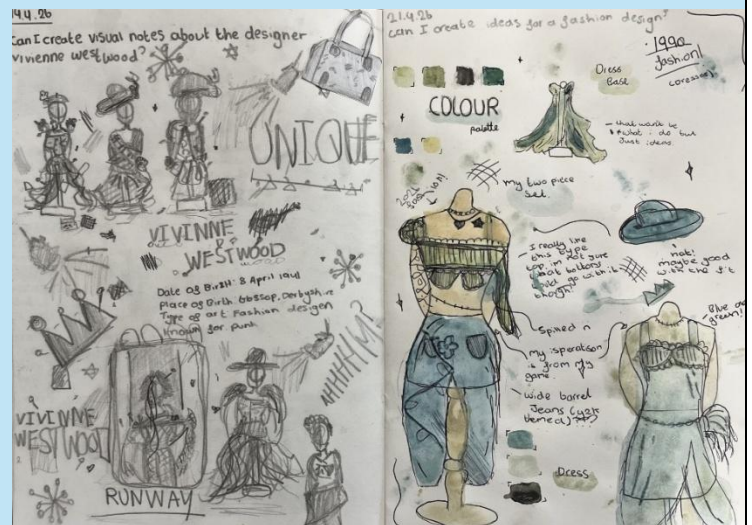
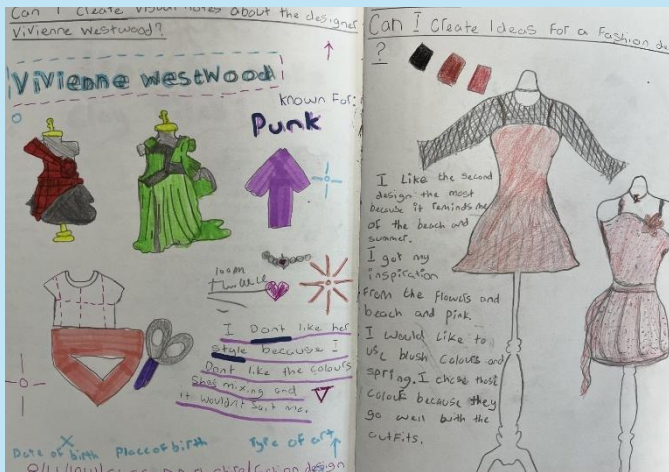
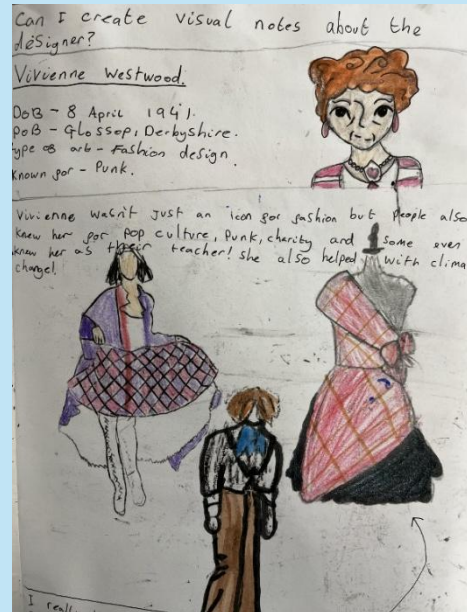
Y7 will soon begin their unit of “The Problem of Evil”- an atheistic challenge to the existence of religion and God/Gods. This unit starts to help engage their critical thinking skills and helps prepare them for the ethical learning in Y8.

Y8 are looking at the “Death Penalty” this term- they will explore the ethics, history and morality around it. They have already begun to consider their own views- please do debate and talk with them- it can really liven up a dinnertime.

Art Year 5: What an incredible term of amazing art work! At the beginning of the term we continued to complete our collages in the style of Mark Hearld. We also used symmetry and mono-printing to create some beautiful, unique butterflies. We have now moved on to our new topic 'Animation'. So far, we have experimented with various drawing techniques and sketching. We have also started to learn about animators who use paper cut puppets to gather ideas for our own designs.

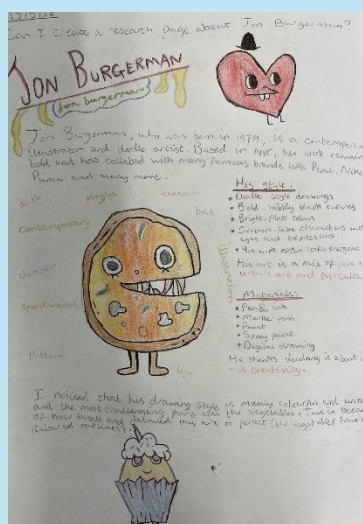
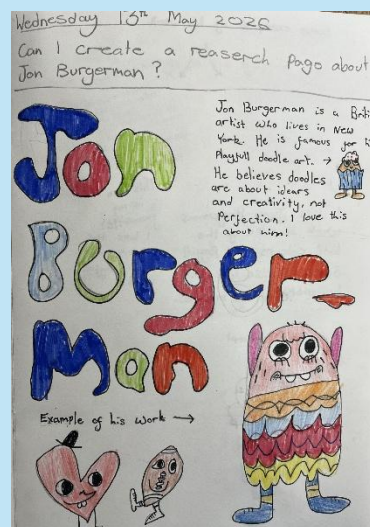


Year 6: The beginning of term was spent creating our clay tiles, from our observational drawings of fruit. Each child made these from scratch, using clay, clay tools and then acrylic paint. We have now come to the end of our 'Fashion Design' unit of work. We learned about famous designer Vivienne Westwood and then created our own ideas, colour palettes and sketches. We have now made our own free-standing cardboard mannequins and used painted paper to cut out our designs. The results have been awesome!

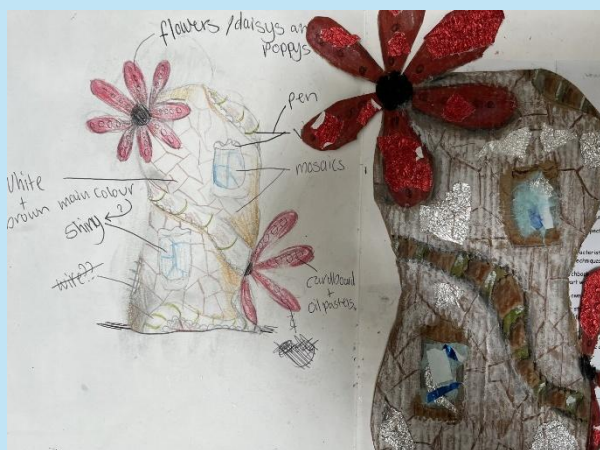


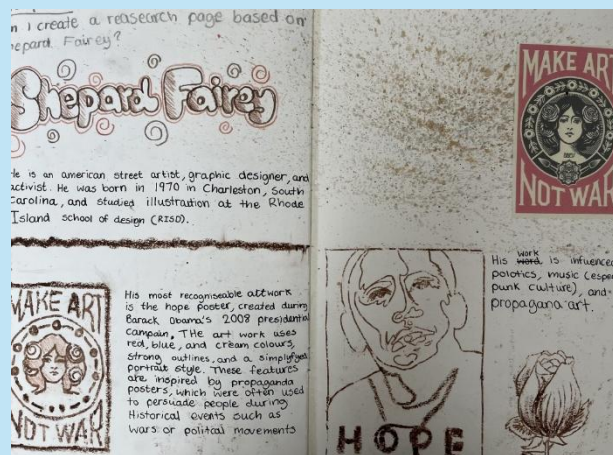


Year 7: Year 7 were busy at the beginning of term carving clay to make their African mask in the style of Kimmy Cantrell. We used mark making and our knowledge of colour theory to decorate these in acrylic paint. Our new topic is 'Urban Landscape'. We have studied the artist and illustrator Jon Burgerman as well as used his style to create our own characters, doodles and names. We are now ending our unit by creating 2 point perspective drawings.

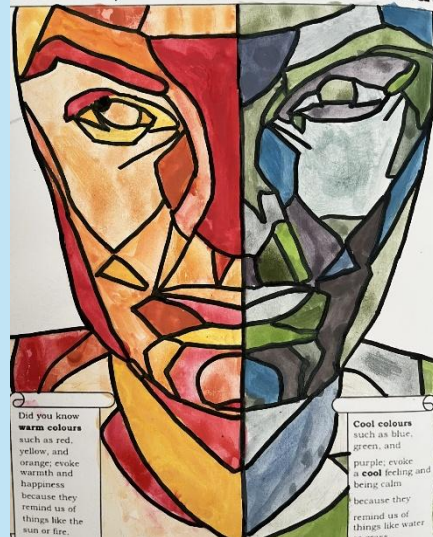


Year 8: Year 8 have had a busy term! We completed our unit 'Architecture' with some amazing nature drawings inspired by Antoni Gaudi, which we then turned into our own building designs using cardboard. As well as this, we used the ideas of Ian Murphy to create some outstanding drawings on textured paper. We have now started our final project 'My Voice' where we have researched artists Shepard Fairey and Luke Dixon. We are now creating our final artwork, using the ideas of these two artists and an image of their choice.





Colours, Moods, Hot and Cold.



Technology

Food & Nutrition

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

Year 5 Resistant Materials

Year 5 have continued with the design and construction of their sledges. They have developed their practical skills in the use of a try-square, dovetail saw, belt-sander and glue gun. They have displayed excellent teamwork, problem solving and ability to read and use a working drawing.

We are now mid-race season where students are competing for first place (the team that carries the most bricks, over the furthest distance and in the shortest time. Overall class winners will be announced in the coming weeks. The big question: which team is the ultimate Year 5 winner?

Year 6 Resistant Materials

Year 6 are now on their way to completing the art inspired clocks. They should make it safely home by the end of term. I am always in awe of the quality of the practical projects, especially when they have been made by hand, using workshop tools and at such a young age! Well done yr6! We will be concluding the summer term with a focus on key practical sewing skills. This will help students to be fully prepared for the Year 7 cushion project.

Year 7 Textiles

Year 7 are working hard to complete their cushion covers. Again, it brings me great joy witnessing the student's enthusiasm for the project. There will be an opportunity to purchase a cushion inner in September before the cushion covers make their way home.

Year 8 Resistant Materials

Year 8 The mood light practical is in full progress and on target to reach home by the end of term. Year 8 have been a fantastic group of students this year. Their enthusiasm, effort and willingness to learn and try out new things is worthy of recognition. Best wishes for the future Year 8, you have all been a pleasure to teach! I look forward to hearing about your careers in the Technology world.

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

Romeo and Juliet: Before half term, Year 7 students were exploring *Romeo and Juliet* through practical Drama activities designed to support their understanding of the play before studying it in greater depth in English. Rather than focusing on Shakespeare's language, students have been investigating key themes including conflict, risk, decision-making, escalation, and responsibility through still

images, role play, improvisation, discussion, and physical theatre.

The intention of this unit is to help students understand how small decisions and missed opportunities can contribute to larger consequences, as well as to develop confidence in performance, collaboration, and critical thinking. Activities have encouraged students to explore situations from different perspectives and consider how events might have unfolded differently if characters had made alternative choices.

The Detectives: This half term, Year 7 will investigate the mysterious disappearance of Anne Fairfax (a fictional character) through a series of drama lessons. Working in role as detectives and police professionals, they will analyse clues, question witnesses and develop theories as the investigation unfolds.

Through techniques such as role play, improvisation, hot seating and freeze frames, students will develop their performance skills while exploring how tension, character and suspense are created in drama. The unit encourages creativity, collaboration and critical thinking as students work together to solve the mystery.

Year 5

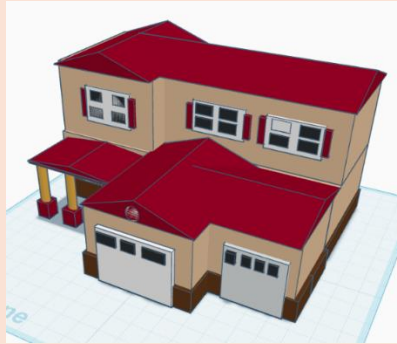
This half term, year 5 have had the opportunity to participate in drama lessons. The unit they are doing is linked to their work in English on *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell. Students have been developing the foundations of successful Drama lessons by exploring classroom routines, safe working practices and ensemble skills. Through activities such as creating soundscapes, students have experimented with using voice and sound to create atmosphere, while learning the importance of listening, focus, cooperation and self-control. As the term progresses, students will build on these skills through practical drama work exploring survival, teamwork and decision-making in challenging situations.

Computing

Year 5



The classes have been enjoying the vector graphics topic on PowerPoint, creating pictures using shapes and lines. The tasks have become increasingly more complicated, and the children have produced some fantastic pictures. The end of the summer term can be disrupted with various events and trips, so the children may start the last topic about how to create videos, or they might be given some standalone lessons and given a task to create something in an hour, Scratch, for example.



Year 6

The classes have been concentrating on the 3D-graphics topic, using an online platform called Tinkercad. Again, the tasks have become increasingly more complex, and the range of 3D-models produced has been amazing. An example of a dream house:

Year 7

The classes have been focusing on computer programming. They are using an online platform called Edublocks. This is a great free resource, because it acts as a halfway point between Scratch and text-based python programming. The block interface is still there, but it allows the children to see the equivalent text in a separate window. This will be incredibly useful when they start the text-based Python topic in Year 8.

Year 8

The classes have been focused on text-based Python programming. The Edublocks topic from Year 7 has helped with this. The topic can be very difficult, as the children are essentially presented with a new language to learn. At times we have to treat the lessons as language lessons, and learn in the same way as if they were in a French lesson. Repetition is key, and the topic focusses on a sequence of very small tasks to enable constant use of the new language. They have finished off the term with a small Tinkercad 3D-modelling topic, building their dream room, but then manually converting it into a 2D scale version in PowerPoint.