

thegrange school
› INSPIRING LEARNING

Newsletter

Issue 36 – October 2026

Dear Families of The Grange School,

I can hardly believe we are already approaching the end of our first half term together. The weeks since September have flown by, and as I walk around school each day, I continue to be struck by the warmth, positivity and sense of community that makes our school such a special place.

I am incredibly proud of our pupils. They have returned to school with enthusiasm, embraced new routines and challenges, and consistently shown kindness and care towards one another. Whether in lessons, around the school site or out in the community, our pupils remind me every day why our work is so important.

This half term has been focused on creating the very best opportunities for our pupils to learn, develop and succeed. Behind the scenes, Team Members have been working incredibly hard to further strengthen teaching, learning and wider support across the school. Their dedication to our pupils never ceases to amaze me, and I am grateful for everything they do each day.

We are also excited about developing our outdoor learning spaces and creating even more opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the classroom. The enchanted wood was a wonderful space to pumpkin pick. These experiences play such an important role in supporting confidence, communication, wellbeing and independence.

As we head into the half-term break, I hope everyone takes time to rest, recharge and enjoy some well-deserved family time. Thank you for your continued support, encouragement and trust. Together, we are building a school where every child feels valued, supported and able to achieve their very best.

I would like to wish all our families a restful half term break. I look forward to welcoming everyone back for another busy and exciting chapter in our school year, with plenty of opportunities to learn, grow, and celebrate together.

With warmest wishes, and a Happy Halloween

Mrs Holloway

Jane Holloway
Headteacher



✨ Celebrating Black History Month! ✨

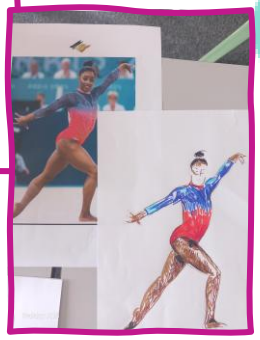


Our pupils visited a local Black History mural to learn about influential figures and important events. The visit encouraged discussion, reflection, and a greater appreciation of cultural diversity and heritage.

For Black History Month, pupils are creating a mural inspired by their recent trip, celebrating influential Black figures and their achievements - These are what they have started so far. To support their learning, we are displaying posters of famous Black people and playing cultural music to inspire creativity, encourage discussion, and deepen understanding of Black history, culture, and contributions to society







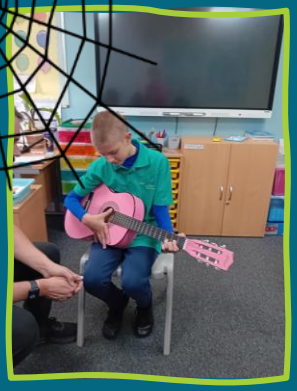


Our Nurture pupils took inspiration from **Bob Marley** and used their fine motor skills to create his iconic hairstyle. They carefully rolled, twisted and shaped materials to recreate his famous dreadlocks, developing their hand strength, coordination and creativity along the way. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activity and were proud to showcase their fantastic artwork inspired by a music legend.

We held food tasting event for all pupils and team members, where everyone enjoyed a variety of delicious dishes from across Africa and the Caribbean. It was a wonderful opportunity to explore different cultures through food. A huge thank you to all the Team Members who kindly gave their time to prepare and share these fantastic dishes. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone



✨ What we have been up to ✨



🎵 Music

Our Year 7 pupils learned some simple guitar chords and practised basic strumming patterns during their music lesson. They developed coordination, rhythm, and listening skills while learning how chords are used to play songs. Pupils showed great enthusiasm, building confidence as they successfully played the chords.

🌍 International Space Week

For International Space Week, our younger pupils enjoyed a fun, hands-on activity linked to the theme "Rocket Revolution." They rolled and folded paper to create simple rockets that could slide onto metal straws, then used their breath to launch them. Pupils had great fun watching their rockets fly, comparing distances, and developing their creativity, coordination, and enthusiasm for learning through play.

Mr Ayling did lots of fun rocket themed practicals for space week which our pupils absolutely loved.





🧪 Science

Our Year 11 pupils explored electrolysis, learning how electricity can be used to separate substances into their components. They investigated the movement of ions, identified the positive and negative electrodes, and observed how chemical changes occur during the process. This practical activity helped develop their scientific knowledge and investigative skills.

🫑 Cooking

Our Year 7 pupils made stuffed peppers, developing their food preparation and cooking skills. They learned how to safely prepare ingredients, follow a recipe, and use kitchen equipment correctly. Pupils practised teamwork, hygiene, and measuring techniques while creating a healthy, colourful dish and gained confidence through hands-on learning.



🎃 Enchanted Wood - Pumpkin patch

Pupils enjoyed visiting the school's very own pumpkin patch, where they carefully chose their own pumpkins. Inspired by the colourful artwork of Yayoi Kusama, they decorated their pumpkins using bold patterns and spots. This creative activity encouraged individuality, artistic expression, and fine motor skills while celebrating the autumn season together.











🍔 Cooking

Our Primary pupils enjoyed making delicious pancakes as part of a fun cooking activity. They carefully measured and weighed the ingredients, developing their maths and practical life skills while following the recipe step by step. The pupils worked brilliantly together, showing great concentration and teamwork, and were delighted to enjoy their tasty pancakes at the end of the session.



🔍 As part of their History learning, our pupils explored **Stonehenge** and used their fine motor skills to carefully build their own versions of the famous monument. The activity helped develop coordination, concentration, and an understanding of this important historical landmark.







🌱 Help Our School Garden Grow! 🌻

We are continuing to develop our **school garden** and would be very grateful for any donations to help us create a fantastic outdoor space for our pupils.

Our Garden Wishlist:

🌸 **Plants & flowers:** Wildflowers, roses, daffodils, crocuses, sweet peas, jasmine, honeysuckle and willow tree cuttings

🍓 **Fruit:** Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, grapes and fruit trees

🧤 **Equipment:** Gardening gloves, shovels, rakes, pruning tools, bamboo canes and plant ties

🌱 **Supplies:** Compost, soil, manure/fertiliser, bird food and frost protection

🔨 **Larger items:** Water butts, sleepers for raised beds, wood for benches, a polytunnel and materials for a cold frame or growing arch



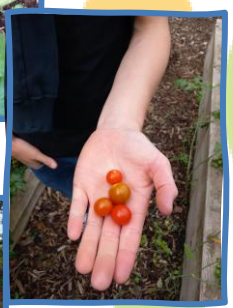
New or good-quality pre-loved items are very welcome!
If you have anything you would be happy to donate, please contact the school. For larger items, please speak to us before bringing them in.

So far, we have been busy working in the garden and taking part in a variety of practical activities. We created a pond using a trough, which will help attract wildlife and provide a valuable habitat for insects and other creatures. We also planted daffodil bulbs ready for spring, and we are looking forward to seeing their colourful blooms appear in the warmer months.

As part of caring for the garden, we raked up fallen leaves and added them to the compost, helping to create nutrient-rich compost that can be used to support future plant growth. We also pruned the tomato plants to encourage healthy development and help the plants focus their energy on producing larger, stronger tomatoes.

These activities have given us the opportunity to learn more about gardening, wildlife, and the environment while working together as a team and taking pride in improving our outdoor space.













🐸 FRoGS 🐸

Thank you to everyone who joined our online PTA meeting! Your support is invaluable to our school community.

🎉 Fundraising Celebrations!

We have some fantastic fundraising news to share thanks to your amazing generosity:

The Spectacle of Light Raffle raised a fantastic **£86.00**!

Easyfundraising stands at an incredible **£794.65** with **30 active supporters**! If you haven't signed up yet, it is a free and easy way to raise money for the school while you shop online.

🗳️ Committee Voting & Roles

As we didn't have enough votes at our September AGM, voting forms will be sent out soon. We'd love for you to get involved, so please keep an eye out for them!

🎄 Christmas Fair: Donations & Helpers Needed!

We are now actively taking donations for our Christmas Fair stall. If you can spare any of the following, please drop them into the school:

Chocolate & Wine

Toys & Small Gifts

Volunteer for a shift: We are looking for helpers to run the stall on **28th November**. The day runs from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm. Look out for the sign-up forms coming out soon!

👚 New Second-Hand Uniform Shop

We are excited to announce the launch of a second-hand uniform shop! This will be headed up by the lovely Anna .

🗓️ What's Next? (Events & School Trips)

We have plenty of exciting plans in the works for the coming year, including:

Our upcoming **Quiz Night** (already in the diary!)

An **Easter Trail**

A **sponsored Zumbathon**

A **parents' coffee morning**

We will also be actively fundraising to help subsidise **school trips**, so any fresh fundraising ideas are very welcome.

📱 Spread the Word!

We need your help to spread the word! **The "spread the word" templates for Christmas donations have now been shared via the WhatsApp groups** for your personal Facebook and Instagram channels.

We also have donation request letters for local businesses. If you can share a few with businesses in your area, please let us know and we'll provide copies.

Our next meeting is on **10th November 2026 at 6:00 pm**. We would love to see you there!

Laura

🗓️ Dates for the diary 🗓️

- ☆ Children in need is 13th November – Non-Uniform Day (£1 donation)
- ☆ Odd sock day 16th November donation of £1 for the anti-bullying alliance
- ☆ Anti- Bullying week on Monday 16th - Friday 20th.
- ☆ **Saturday 28th November – Christmas Fair**
- ☆ Monday 30th November – School Photographs

👉 Gentle Reminders 👈

- ❖ We look forward to seeing our pupils on Tuesday 2nd November.
- ❖ Thank you to the families who have already completed and returned the Emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injector (EpiPen) Consent Form. If you have not yet done so, please return the completed form to school as soon as possible.
- ❖ We would like to remind all families that **if your child is going to be absent from school, you must let us now know by 8:30am on each day of absence**. This applies to **all pupils across the school**. We now have a **new dedicated email address** for reporting pupil absences:

  @ thegrange.absences@phoenixschools.org.uk

- ❖ Please inform the school of any changes to your child's transport arrangements. It would be helpful for us to know if there has been a change of taxi driver or transport route.
- ❖ Please notify the school of any changes to your child's medication so that our records remain accurate in case emergency services are required.

☎️ We'd love to hear from you ☎️

If you'd like to get in touch, please email us at grange@phoenixschools.org.uk, call **0330 135 8154** or find us at **The Grange School, 18–21 Church Gate, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 3PN**