

April 2025



Orchard House

Another term that has gone by in a flash and as we draw to a close, it finally feels as though Spring has arrived!

It has been a busy term at Orchard House, with lots of exciting things packed in to our core curriculum and during My Space too.

Our students have been having careers discussions this term through specialist advice and focussed lessons during National Apprenticeship Week. Thinking about next steps and post-16 destinations, Tracey McNicholas has been busy supporting our students' visiting colleges, submitting applications, organising work experience and recently taking a Year 11 group to The Bucks Skills Show.

Children's Mental Health Week saw us exploring the story of The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse with our KS3s, and to fit the 2025 theme 'Knowing yourself, Growing yourself', our KS4s created Trees of Life.

We also welcomed some unusual visitors to our school this term including a tortoise, a praying mantis, a gecko and a leaf insect, all of whom attracted a lot of interest and curiosity!

Making the most of the weather and our fabulous surroundings, a small group of KS3s enjoyed a Maths trail in Chesham and to celebrate World Book Day we enjoyed some reading in our small garden, sitting in the sunshine.

We wish all of our families a happy and peaceful holiday and we look forward to another exciting term ahead.

Rebecca Brooks & Anna Newbold
Heads of School

"What's your best discovery?" asked the mole



"That I'm enough as I am"
said the boy

English

KS3 students have been focusing on writing persuasive texts. They discussed different ways of constructing complex sentences in a creative way to 'hook' our readers further.

KS4 students have produced a vast amount of work leading them towards their GCSE exams. They have written brilliant stories and persuasive letters on a variety of different topics.

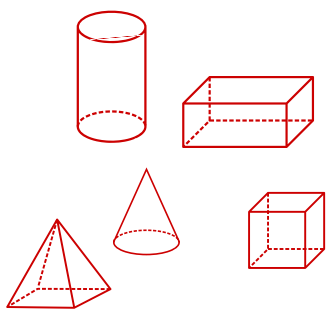
The missing hour

In a quaint village sat near to the ocean shore, a peculiar antique shop had recently opened its doors, drawing the attention of four adventurous friends - Bella, Jake, Ava and Cameron. The shop was a labyrinth of forgotten treasures, each item whispering tales of the past. As they crept slowly through the ^{aisles}, their eyes fell upon a striking pocket watch, its surface intricately adorned but dulled by time. The shopkeeper, an elderly man with a twinkle in his eye, warned them, 'That watch holds secrets that should remain buried and untouched.'

Main character: Ebony

My body shot up as I gasped, the polluted air hitting my lungs. I suppose the first instincts I had were to search for help; scream, shout in fear. Even though I was overwhelmed with terror and stress, I knew why I was here; it was just the dilemma that was finding my way out. Here: a soggy, endless, echoing forest. The tall, slender tree branches leaning into me was the only company I felt I had. As I stare out into the thick, clouded air, paranoia creeping up on me, it's like being under water: deafening silence. So loud but so quiet. You see everything in a distorted, blurry way, yet so clearly. There's no more time to waste. I picked a direction around me, and sprinted. I didn't stop running. A good 45 minutes passed, though that were estimated. I didn't have anything with me when I woke up, apart from a ripped, ragged red blanket. No food, no clothes - other than the ones I have on now - and no phone. When I finally reached an exit to the forest, I was only led to an entrance to something I've never seen before.... This was happening. That fear, terror fills my body. An exasperating feeling like no other. I should've known. I should've known that creepy forest was too quiet, too empty...

Maths



KS3 have been investigating shapes and their properties such as area, volume and perimeter. On a recent outing into Chesham town centre, students used this time creatively for a maths trail, finding shapes in the buildings.

Year 10 have also been working with shapes of a more complex nature, such as cones, spheres and compound shapes.

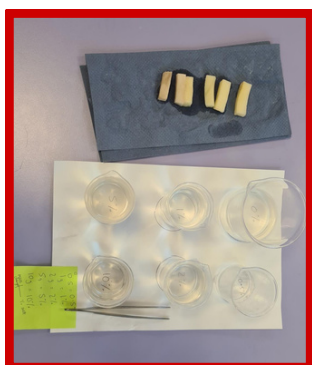
Year 11 student have been focusing on exam techniques for their forthcoming GCSEs. A past exam paper every week until the exams, is their target now!

EXAM!

Science

KS3 students have been studying forces, classifying them into contact and non-contact types, as well as identifying them as scalar or vector quantities.

Year 10 have investigated the process of osmosis in potatoes and how salt concentration in a solution can affect the movement of water into and out of cells. They have also conducted food tests to identify starch, glucose, protein, and lipids in various solutions, and have been learning about the digestive system and enzymes.

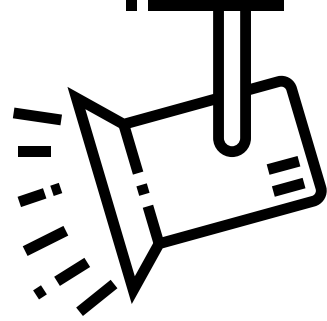


Year 11 have been studying the changes in the Earth's atmosphere since its formation 4.6 billion years ago. They have also been learning about the causes and impacts of climate change, as well as ways to reduce their carbon footprint through personal choices and actions, in order to mitigate the effects of climate change.



Drama at Orchard House

One of this term's highlights for our KS4s, was the recent and brilliantly performed piece, "Hooked", a bespoke drama-based intervention, commissioned by Performance in Education.



PERFORMANCE IN EDUCATION



Art Work

We have had another successful and productive term in art.

KS3 students have been experimenting with various media and techniques, with their batik work being particularly impressive.

Some KS4 students have been working incredibly hard towards their final exams, while others have chosen alternative techniques, creating black and white paintings without using paintbrushes.

ART





Over the last half term, students at Orchard House have demonstrated remarkable engagement during our SaLT sessions from Magic Words! We have observed fantastic progress as they work towards their targets, enhancing their social communication and emotional regulation skills.

From participating in Lego Therapy to exploring the Language for Behaviour and Emotions programme, it has been a rewarding and enjoyable journey for everyone involved. We look forward to more SaLT sessions after the Easter break.



Dates for your diary:

End of Spring term: Friday 4 April 2025

Bank Holidays: Friday 18 April 2025 & Monday 21 April 2025

Start of Summer term: Tuesday 22 April 2025

Bank Holidays: Monday 5 May 2025 & Monday 26 May 2025

Half term: Tuesday 27 May 2025 - Friday 30 May 2025

Inset Day: Monday 2 June 2025

Year 11 Leavers Family Celebration: Wednesday 25 June 2025

KS3 Coffee Morning: Wednesday 16 July 2025

End of Summer Term: Friday 18 July 2025

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