



Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust

Spring Newsletter – April 2026

Message from Lesley West, CEO.

This newsletter provides a brief summary of some of the events that have happened in each of our schools during the Spring Term.

Owlcotes MAT continues to grow. We are a now community of 9 Primary schools across Leeds. All of our schools are really different, and yet all share an absolute commitment to achieving the best for all of our pupils, staff and our school communities by working together in close partnership.

I am, as always, impressed by each school's determination to provide an enriched and full curriculum for all our pupils, including trips, visits and visitors, indoor and outdoor experiences and participation in art, music and sporting events.

This term we have celebrated the Shakespeare in Schools Festival, with Year 5 pupils in four of our schools performing at the Carriageworks Theatre. It was great to hear that the children, performed with such confidence. Well done to all the children and 'thank you' to all the teacher directors who made the event so successful.

Our schools took part in a successful Owlcotes Literature festival in February and we are looking forward to our annual Year 6 debating competition in June.

Thank you to all our schools, their staff and pupils, and of course to the fantastic families in all our communities. I wish everyone a 'happy holidays' for the forthcoming Spring Break and Easter Holiday and I look forward to working with everyone again next term.

I hope you enjoy reading the rest of this newsletter, which includes information about some of the events that have happened in our individual schools.

If you want to keep up to date with what is happening or find out more about Owlcotes Trust you can do so by visiting our website: www.owlcotesmat.org or by following us on X [@owlcotesMAT](https://twitter.com/owlcotesMAT).



Round Up of News from Owlcotes Schools

Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School

Year 2 Temple Newsam visit

Year 2 had a fantastic visit to Temple Newsam. We visited Thomas' bakery and helped him set up his fire. We looked for fire hazards around the house and realised that it would have been very difficult to stop a fire in 1666. We also got the opportunity to carry out some role play pretending we were the fire!



Year 5 Space Camp

Year 5 had a great time sleeping over at school. They took part in astronaut training, model making and star gazing outside. They were then treated to hot chocolate and biscuits before settling down to a film before bed.



We were so happy and impressed with the behaviour and resilience the children showed. Well done team!

Music Enrichment

Year 5 music enrichment group visited Airedale Residential Home to treat the residents to a musical performance. All children played the recorder and sang and there were also pieces on the flute, violin and clarinet.

Eco-Committee Hug in a Box - Pudsey Community Project

Thank you to the families, staff and Angela, the ASDA Pudsey Community champion who donated items for our 'hug in a box' project. 20 boxes have been created for the eco-committee's 'hug in a box' project. The children were so inspired to help elderly members of the community following co-hosting the Christmas lunch party, at the Pudsey Community Project with ASDA.

This enthusiasm has resulted in another wonderful outcome for members of our community. We hope the elderly members of the community who received one of our boxes, feel the warmth of our support. The children enjoyed decorating the boxes out of recycled materials, making and writing a card and packing the boxes full of items like mugs, tea bags, coffee, biscuits, a book, gloves, socks and tissues.



The children were delighted to have the boxes delivered to the Pudsey Community Project and continue to support the charity through their ASDA Heroes project for the second year. The Pudsey Community Project gave out these boxes during the seniors' lunch club.

Y5 Shakespeare Production

Some of our brilliant Year 5 pupils went to Leeds Carriageworks to perform their version of the Shakespeare classic 'Hamlet'. They have worked so hard on this show, rehearsing their characters each week and giving some fantastic creative ideas along the way. All of the children gave their best performance to date and really gave the audience a great show. They were professional and polite throughout the entire process and were an absolute credit to themselves. Well done to the Y5 team for all their hard work and unwavering enthusiasm!

Reception Train Trip - Civic Pride!

Our Reception classes both took part in our Owlcotes Element 'Civic Pride' this week as they travelled by train to Leeds City Station. They travelled by train from New Pudsey station into Leeds. They loved talking about the things that they saw and heard as we were out and about. For some children it was their first time travelling by train and experiencing the sights, sounds and movements!



Children really enjoyed drawing and writing about their experiences when they returned to school.

Holi Colour Run - Community Event

It was wonderful to see so many families joining us for the Holi colour. Our wet weather plan worked brilliantly (!) and we are so pleased so many families joined in. Thank you to you all and our staff for making this a great community event.

Pudsey Waterloo Primary School

Back Chat Brass

As part of our Owlcotes Elements theme 'We are all artists', the children enjoyed an electrifying performance by the brilliant Back Chat Brass. The band brought the hall to life with their high-energy covers of modern pop hits, demonstrating that artistry can be vibrant, contemporary, and incredibly fun. It was a fantastic opportunity for the pupils to witness live music first-hand and see how traditional instruments can be used to reimagine the songs they know and love. This memorable experience has left the children feeling truly inspired and perfectly showcased the diverse ways we can all express ourselves as artists.

Year 2

Year 2 had an amazing workshop with Ian from Junior Stem. The children enjoyed following algorithms to create a moving carousel. They had to work in partners, finding the different Lego pieces to make their carousel and they showed great resilience when the building got tricky with the smaller parts.

Year 4

Year 4 pupils visited the Royal Armouries in Leeds. The morning began with a self-guided tour, followed by a live demonstration featuring a member of the Roman army and a Celt. In the afternoon, the children thoroughly enjoyed workshops focused on Celtic life and the Roman military. They had the opportunity to handle artefacts that the Celts would have used in tribal battles.



In true Roman style, the children learned to follow marching orders from a Centurion and even successfully formed a testudo (tortoise) formation. If the children reported that their teachers were throwing axes at them—don't worry! They were well-protected by wooden shields, and the axes were, thankfully, made of foam.



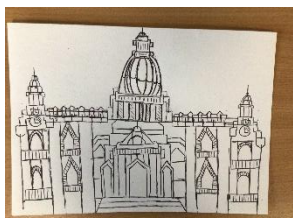
Shakespeare Performance

Year 5 were extremely excited to perform their production of A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Carriageworks Theatre in front of a very large audience. The children have been working extremely hard in

rehearsals and produced a wonderful, confident, professional and highly entertaining performance. The delight on all the children's faces as they came off stage was a marvellous thing to witness. A massive 'well done' to all the cast and huge thanks to everyone who came to watch, and to all the staff members who have supported the children on the day or during rehearsals. Thanks too to parents and families for all your support with learning lines and providing costumes.



Year 6



In our art lessons in Year 6 we have been learning about architecture, with a focus on the buildings designed by Yorkshire-born architect Cuthbert Brodrick. We have spent lots of time studying the buildings he designed in Leeds city centre, such as: Leeds Town Hall, Leeds City Museum and Leeds Corn



Exchange. We have learnt about different sketching techniques, including: continuous line drawing, non-dominant hand drawing and drawing using fine liners

and biros. This week we sketched our final piece, which was a Cuthbert Brodrick designed building and inspired by the contemporary artist Lizzie Prestt. Our final pieces will be assembled as a cityscape of Leeds and will be displayed on our Year 6 display board outside the hall.



Reading Ambassadors

This week, the Reading Ambassadors from Year 1 up to Year 6 have been busy choosing books from our school library to create three new reading areas around school. They discussed which theme they would like each new reading area to have and agreed on 'Mystery/Detective' books, 'Fantasy/Magic' books and the final reading area will have a selection of graphic novels. One of the new reading areas will be in the entrance to school, near the school office. Look out for it when you are next in school. We are also busy with making plans for World Book Day, which takes place on Thursday 5th March, and we're looking forward to sharing our ideas after half term.



Reading Breakfasts and World Book Day



It was wonderful to see so many families joining us for our Reading Breakfasts. The children truly loved having their grown-ups in school to share stories, join in with activities, and enjoy a bit of breakfast together.

Thank you so much to everyone who attended for making it such a success. Your support in encouraging a love of reading across the school is greatly appreciated!

Calverley Parkside Primary School

World Book Day - the reveal!

The mystery is finally over! After a week of hushed whispers and clever theories, we have officially revealed the identities of our Masked Readers.



The "Who's Behind the Book?" challenge created a fantastic buzz throughout the school, with pupils (and staff!) turning into amateur detectives to solve the clues.

Youth Summit

Our Junior Leadership team recently took a front-row seat in local democracy at the Leeds Youth Summit. It wasn't just a school visit; it was an opportunity for our children to step into the shoes of the city's decision-makers and advocate for the issues that matter most to their peers.

The day kicked off with an incredible visit to the Leeds City Council Chamber. Sitting in the very seats where the city's policies are debated, our children got a true sense of the weight and importance of local government.

The highlight for many was a formal meeting with the Lord Mayor of Leeds. Our leaders had the chance to discuss the challenges facing young people today and hear first-hand about the Lord Mayor's role in representing our vibrant city.

Y5 - Shakespeare

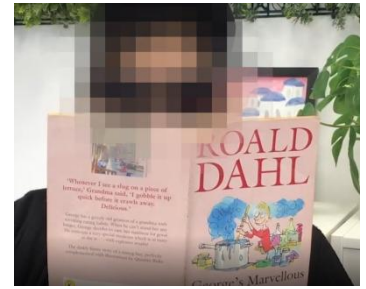
Our Year 5 stars truly shone this week as they took to the professional stage at the Carriageworks Theatre in Leeds for their Shakespeare performance. It was an incredible experience for the children to perform in such a prestigious venue, and the hard work they put into rehearsals certainly paid off. I have been overwhelmed by the positive feedback from parents, many of whom shared how much their children flourished and enjoyed the thrill of the spotlight.



Frank Cottrell Boyce

We were absolutely thrilled to welcome the legendary author and screenwriter Frank Cottrell-Boyce to our school this week for an unforgettable KS2 assembly. The hall was buzzing with energy as our Year 3, 4, 5, and 6 pupils were joined by friends from Calverley C of E and Tranmere Park Primary School for a truly special event. Frank took us on a whirlwind journey through his career, sharing the sparks of inspiration behind his famous books and his fascinating work in film. From reimagining ancient stories like the Canterbury Tales to wowing the crowd with unexpected magic tricks, his talk was as hilarious as it was thought-provoking.

Our children were fantastic ambassadors for the school. They listened intently, engaged with every story, and asked some truly brilliant questions. Frank was so impressed by their energy that he left us with a wonderful compliment, describing the children as "lively and polite" and an absolute credit to our community. It was a day filled with laughter and inspiration that will undoubtedly stay with our young readers



and writers for a long time to come! The book signing that followed was brilliant and we are extremely grateful for the visit! Thank you to Truman Books for enabling this to happen. Thanks also to one of our wonderful parents, Rebecca Bate, for linking us up for this amazing opportunity.

Literature Week 9th-13th February: This is where I belong

“If you’re feeling lost - start with what you know...” Oliver Jeffers, Here We Are.

Our literature week happened to fall during Children’s Mental Health week. We began the week in the best way with every class visiting the wonderdome. This provided us with awe and wonder and prompted us to think about our place in the world, what is really important in our lives and how we can look after the planet, ourselves and each other.

Forensic Science Experience

Years 3-5 took part in an exciting forensic science experiment where they had to solve a crime. Pupils collected evidence including finger prints, footprints and DNA in order to figure out who the suspect was. It was a superb experience which will hopefully inspire a future generation of Parkside detectives.



A Royal Visit

King Charles II travelled through time to visit our Year 2 pupils. Following the Great Fire of London, The King was looking for ways to rebuild a new London. The Year 2 pupils pitched numerous ideas to him which he excitedly took back to 1666.

Y4 - Roman Day

Year 4 celebrated a fantastic Roman Day! We were delighted to welcome a visitor to school who brought in artefacts, explored battle formations, and allowed the children to re-enact formations for battle. They had an amazing time and equally looked fierce when preparing for battle! It was

truly a memorable day for the children.

Armley Park Primary School

Year 5 Shakespeare

Year 5 performed Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night at the Carriageworks Theatre. Every child in the class took part in the performance to retell a modern version of the story. They even managed to include songs such as YMCA and Love Story by Taylor Swift!



Year 6 Residential

Year 6 had a fantastic weekend at Robinwood where they had the chance to experience a whole range of activities including canoeing, archery, high ropes and problem solving. They all gave 100% to all of the activities and although they were very tired, and quite grubby, when we returned, they have made some lifelong memories with their friends.



Artist of the Half-Term

Each half-term, all the classes focus on the work by one artist. This time, we have been learning about Georgia O'Keefe and each class tried to recreate her famous 'Sunflower New Mexico' painting using a range of different techniques.

Manor Wood Primary School

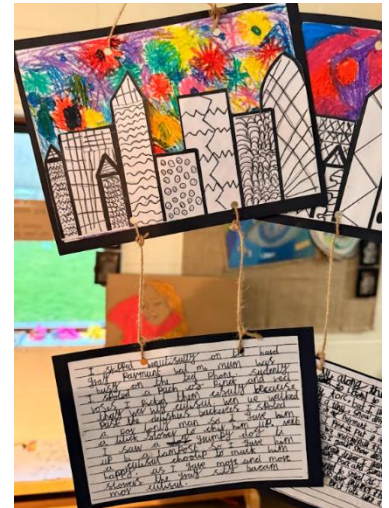
OMAT Literature Week

During OMAT literature week the children at Manor Wood studied and interpreted the picture book *Footpath Flowers* by JonArno Lawson. Children from our baby nest through to year 6 looked closely at the pictures and the characters to bring the story to life. Children explored mark making in the early years linked to the text and decorated rocks to leave in the community to encourage members to see the natural beauty around. Throughout school



children wrote imaginative narratives from various perspectives or wrote detailed setting descriptions from the wonderful images in the text.

The week started with a launch assembly for the school and finished with an exhibition of learning where the children's artwork and writing took parents on a journey through the story. Our parent event was well attended and the children really enjoyed celebrating their hard work.



FSU - Children's Interests

The children's long-standing interest in birds has followed a further line of inquiry into spring, looking at nest building and the life cycle of birds. A provocation was brought to the group with open-ended materials to encourage curiosity, as the children explored how nests are built and how birds nurture their eggs and chicks.

Whole School Climate Change March

The whole school took part in a climate change protest walk in British Science Week. Children spent time in their classes learning about the effects of climate change and what we can do as citizens to prevent this. Children made banners



and thought carefully about the message they wanted to give the community. Our march was led by the Eco Team and we made our way around the community. Members of the community lined the streets and joined in with giving our message.



Springtime for the 2's

During a delightful spring walk, our children came across daffodils and paused to admire their shapes and colours. They were captivated by the vibrant hues of the flowers, and we closely examined the daffodils while discussing their stems and the delicate form of the petals. Afterwards, the children took their time to observe the Daffodils and created observational drawings of the daffodils.

Spring Bank Primary School

Sports

Our students have been making us proud on the field this term. A talented group of Year 5 and 6 students headed to the Leeds Rhinos' training ground to compete in a local tag rugby tournament. They played with fantastic heart and were impeccable ambassadors for our school.



Meanwhile, our Year 5 class enjoyed a truly memorable afternoon at Headingley Stadium. The children threw themselves into a variety of activities, including archery, cricket, and an insightful introduction to wheelchair sports. The day concluded with a stadium tour and a moving tribute to the history of the club and legends like Rob Burrow, leaving our students inspired by the power of resilience and sport.

Literacy Week

During Literature week, Year 3 enjoyed sessions writing and performing poetry with local poet, James Nash. They worked hard throughout and produced some beautiful poems about penguins. The class then performed their poems to the school and their parents. We were all extremely proud of their incredible attitude in the sessions as well as their creativity. Well done Year 3

Enrichment

NSPCC Number Day – The whole school took part in NSPCC Number Day. The children came to school dressed in maths themed costumes and had lots of number-based activities to complete in class. They also took part in 'NSPCC Rocks' competition via the TTRockstars website.

Y2 Multi-flight Cafe – Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the Multi Flight Cafe at Leeds Bradford Airport. They managed to spot several flights taking off, enabling them to compare modern day planes to the very first gliders created in 1903.



Year 3 had an exciting and fun day out at the Royal Armouries. They were trained to be in the Roman army by Titus the Roman soldier and were welcomed into the Iceni tribe to be part of the story of the legendary female leader and warrior, Boudicca. The children also enjoyed looking at some of the thousands of exhibits in the museum.

Year 4 had an exciting day out at Murton Park. They learned about what life was like for an Anglo-Saxon person and what it was like when Christianity was being introduced to Britain. They made candles, wrote using Anglo Saxon letters, explored Anglo Saxon housing and learnt a game from the times. At the end of the day, they trained how to be Anglo Saxon warriors and protected the village from a Viking intruder.

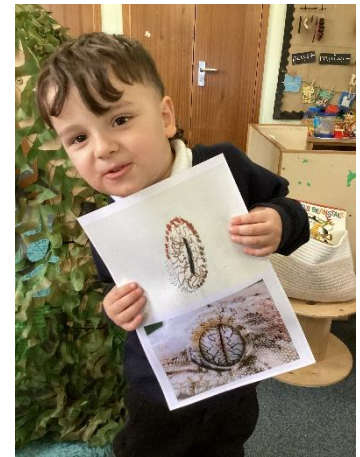
Y5 - Tech We Can

Year 5 had another session with Fran Bartlett from Tech We Can where they learned about connectivity. This involved looking at the history of the internet; the different ways that connecting to the internet have developed over the years and careers that are linked to making sure we can stay connected to the internet. The class were then set a challenge with the Sphero Indi Robots which everyone completed successfully!



Morley Victoria Primary School

Spring 2026 has been a term filled with significant academic progress and a deep commitment to "The Whole Child" approach. School leaders are focusing on key development areas such as oracy, writing, and curriculum fine-tuning while providing various interventions to ensure every student receives the support they need to succeed. Beyond the classroom, the school has been bustling with family events, ranging from open classrooms, Stay and Play sessions for younger children to



important SATs meetings for Year 6. Pupils have also enjoyed a wide array of

trips and enrichment activities, including cooking lessons for Key Stage 2, various musical opportunities like the Rocksteady program, and numerous sports events and clubs including yoga and cheerleading.



The school continues to prioritise personal development through its "Whole Child" offer, which equips students with essential social and emotional skills through a dedicated PSHE curriculum and specialised programs like "Mindmate" and "Big Green Heart". Community involvement remains a cornerstone of the school's culture, evidenced by the successful Greggs Breakfast Club, the National Food Pantry partnership, and pupil-led groups like the "Asda Heroes" and "Eco Warriors".

Fountain Primary School

Another busy term at Fountain. We had a visit from Elliot Hudson College drama students, they performed and did a workshop with our Year 2 children. M and M Theatre company visited us with a performance of Treasure Island.

In Nursery Droplets have been sharing stories about 'Mr Gumpy's Outing' and 'Mr Gumpy's Motor Car.' They have been painting boats and cars. They have also been learning about capacity.





Year 3 have been digging soil pits in Science to look at how soil changes as it gets deeper. Year 5 had a visit from Nursery to help them build bridges in Design and technology.

Year 4 have been building wind turbines and Year 2 have been creating spacecraft with 2D shapes. They used the skills of folding, overlapping and arranging to create some very imaginative designs. Year 5 have been testing their parachutes to see the effects of air resistance.



Some of the Year 4 children attended the 2026 Skipping Festival where they



enjoyed showing off their skipping skills. All the children tried really hard and should be very proud of themselves.

We also supported Comic Relief with an own clothes day and a few games of pin the red nose on the teacher! World Book day was a great success and children were able to share their favourite books.

There have also been visits from the Fire

Service, Year 6 completed their bikeability training, and Year 2 had some skipping training. Our first Owlcotes Literature Festival was a great success. We had visits from an author, the British Library and we read the book 'Rain Before Rainbows'. The week focused our learning on the Owlcotes Element 'A Way with Words'. Children explored vocabulary, wrote stories, had visits from authors and used words to inspire artwork. They also enjoyed sharing stories across the school with some of our oldest children reading with some of our youngest.



Hovingham Primary School

World Book Day

Here at Hovingham, we celebrated with our own special twist. We had pop-up book shops in school, and every child took home two books to enjoy and treasure. Classrooms were filled with reading activities, story sharing, imagination and laughter—quite simply, it was a joyous day across the whole school.



Hovingham's Values Day

We held our very first Values Day, a day to celebrate each other and to truly understand who we are.





Of course, our teachers know the children well: how well they learn, how they socialise, how they are developing personally.

But learning about their culture, beliefs, values, and identity brings a completely different kind of connection — one that deepens our community and reminds us why Hovingham is such a special place.

We will definitely be doing this again, and more often, because celebrating who we are is at the heart of what makes our school so unique and so full of life.

