VOYAGERS TOPIC

OVERVIEW AND CLASS

INFORMATION

'SPARKLES & SHADOWS'

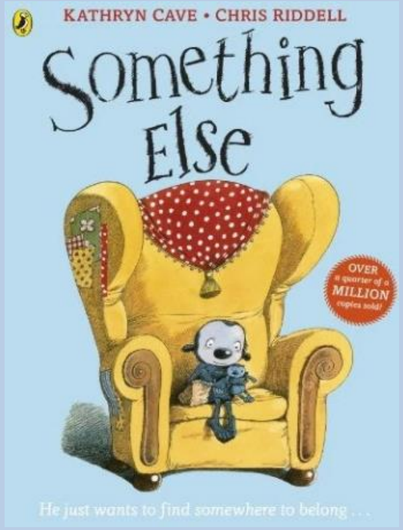
AUTUMN 2026

FLASH CLASS

Reading and Writing

During this unit, children will explore the story *Something Else* by Kathryn Cave, which focuses on themes of friendship, belonging, kindness and celebrating differences. Through shared reading, discussion, role-play and storytelling, children will develop their understanding of characters, settings and events while learning to talk about feelings, make predictions and explain their ideas. They will build a rich vocabulary linked to emotions and relationships and use these new words in their speaking and writing. In writing, children will develop their confidence in applying their phonics knowledge to write words and simple sentences, form letters correctly and communicate their ideas clearly.

They will create labels, captions, speech bubbles and short pieces of writing before retelling and rewriting parts of the story using pictures and story sequences. Throughout the unit, children will be encouraged to reflect on what makes them unique, recognise the importance of inclusion and friendship, and develop confidence in expressing their thoughts and opinions. Learning will be carefully adapted to meet individual needs, with all children supported to become confident communicators and early writers, while those ready for additional challenge will be encouraged to write longer, more detailed sentences, explain their ideas in greater depth and compose increasingl y independent retellings of the story.



Mathematics

This term, your child will be developing early maths skills through practical, multi-sensory learning experiences that involve seeing, touching, hearing and doing. In place value within 10, children explore what numbers mean by counting real objects, comparing groups, and finding one more or one less, helping them understand numbers in a concrete way before moving to symbols. In addition and subtraction within 10, they learn that numbers can be put together and taken apart using objects, stories and everyday situations, building understanding of parts and wholes, simple number bonds and early number sentences. In shape, children investigate both flat (2D) and solid (3D) shapes by handling, sorting and building with real objects, as well as identifying shapes in their environment and creating simple patterns. Across all topics, children learn best through hands-on activities such as counting toys, using fingers, building models and exploring their surroundings, following a step-by-step approach from real objects to pictures and then to abstract ideas. We encourage families to support learning at home by using everyday opportunities—such as counting during routines, talking about shapes around the house, and practising adding or taking away items—while keeping activities simple, repetitive and enjoyable to help build confidence and understanding.

Science

Earth, Sun and Moon

lIn this topic, children are learning about the Earth, Sun and Moon and how they move in ways that explain day and night, sunrise and sunset, and the changing shape of the Moon. They explore how all three objects are round like balls, how the Earth spins to make day and night, how the Sun only seems to move because the Earth is turning, and how the Moon orbits the Earth every 28 days, which is why it looks different across the month. They also learn that the Earth orbits the Sun once a year and practise spotting patterns in simple information, such as how sunrise and sunset times change. The unit uses hands-on models, clear visuals, and short, repeated explanations to help SEND learners understand these ideas step by step and link them to real life, such as noticing when it is light or dark in different seasons.

Art

Collage

Pupils will explore creating colourful collages by cutting, tearing, layering and sticking different papers and shapes. They will learn how colours work together, how overlapping shapes create new effects, and how both filled areas (positive space) and empty areas (negative space) can be used creatively to make artwork.

Drawing

Pupils will explore facial features and learn how faces are made up of different parts that work together. They will develop their drawing and observation skills by using a range of art materials to create lines, textures and tones, before combining drawing and collage techniques to produce larger portrait artworks.

Our Autumn Artist

Adventurers will study the work of Kurt Schwitters, a pioneering collage artist known for creating artwork from found materials. Pupils will explore colour, layering and texture, creating their own collages while learning about positive and negative space and developing their observational drawing skills.

PSHE

Feeling Good About Me – My Emotions: Anger Management

In this unit, pupils focus on understanding and managing their emotions, with a particular emphasis on anger. They learn to recognise what anger feels like in their bodies, explore common triggers, and develop healthy ways to respond to strong feelings. Through discussion, role-play and practical strategies, children are taught calming techniques and ways to communicate their feelings respectfully. This unit supports pupils in building emotional awareness, resilience and positive relationships with others.

Topic

Bonfire Night and Guy Fawkes
In this enrichment-based unit, *Anniversaries and Celebrations – Bonfire Night*, pupils will explore the historical and cultural significance of Bonfire Night through engaging, hands-on sessions. Delivered through enrichment activities, children will learn how Bonfire Night is celebrated today, who Guy Fawkes was, and what happened on 5th November 1605. Learning will be brought to life through a range of practical and creative experiences, including role play, storytelling, sensory exploration, art, music, and food preparation. Pupils will also develop their understanding of time (past and present) and begin to recognise how celebrations link to historical events. There is a strong focus on communication, with opportunities to use speech, signs, or symbols to describe events and experiences. Safety awareness around fireworks will also be explored in a supportive and accessible way.

Earthquakes and Volcanoes
Children will take part in activities that help them experience key features such as noise, heat, light, movement and vibration, supporting their understanding in an accessible way. They will investigate natural materials (e.g. rocks, sand and lava-like substances), compare different places, and begin to recognise where volcanoes and earthquakes occur around the world. Learning is adapted to individual needs, with a strong focus on exploration, communication and engagement through touch, visuals, sound and movement. Pupils will also be introduced to simple geographical skills, such as using maps, pictures and digital media to locate places and describe what they observe. The aim is to build curiosity about the world while developing confidence in exploring and expressing ideas about natural events and environments.

PE

Gymnastics
In this PE unit, pupils explore gymnastics through movement and play, developing confidence in how their bodies move and work. Children will take part in a range of practical activities where they practise basic actions such as travelling, rolling, stretching and balancing using different body parts. They will be supported to copy and repeat simple movements and begin to link them together to create short sequences, often using music, visuals or equipment to aid understanding. Pupils will also explore moving in different ways (e.g. fast/slow, straight/zigzag) and develop awareness of space and direction. A key focus is helping children notice how their bodies feel during exercise (e.g. being hot, out of breath or tired) and encouraging them to communicate their ideas and respond to feedback. Learning is highly adapted, with opportunities for sensory exploration, supported movement and communication through symbols, signs or visuals, ensuring all pupils can access and enjoy physical activity.

RE

What does Light mean?
In this Religious Education unit, children will explore the meaning of light as a symbol of goodness, hope and celebration across different religions. They will learn about the festivals of Diwali (Hinduism), Advent (Christianity), and Hanukkah (Judaism), discovering how light is used in each tradition to represent important beliefs and stories. Through activities such as listening to stories, exploring candles and special objects, and taking part in simple celebrations, pupils will begin to understand similarities and differences between religions. The unit also encourages children to share their own experiences of celebrations and to develop respect, curiosity and appreciation for the diverse world around them.

Computing

Computing Systems and Networks
Pupils will develop their understanding of what information technology (IT) is and will begin to identify examples. They will discuss where they have seen IT in school and beyond, in settings such as shops, hospitals, and libraries. Learners will then investigate how IT improves our world, and they will learn about the importance of using IT responsibly.

Digital footprints
Pupils will learn what a digital footprint is and explore how information shared online can create a picture of a person over time. They will investigate how online activities, websites, and posts can leave traces that others may be able to see and use. Pupils will develop their understanding of online privacy by considering what information is safe to share and what should be kept private.

Music

This term, Voyagers will focus on developing their understanding of rhythm. They will practise copying both simple and more complex rhythmic patterns using their voices, bodies and instruments. Children will also explore how rhythms can change, creating and experimenting with their own rhythmic ideas while building confidence in performing with others.

Throughout the autumn term, all pupils will take part in our Artist of the Month programme, exploring the music of Bob Marley, Tracy Chapman, Björk and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Children will listen to and discuss music from a variety of genres, cultures and historical periods, developing their understanding of how music can communicate emotions, tell stories and reflect different experiences. Through these listening opportunities, pupils will broaden their musical knowledge and appreciation while discovering influential musicians from around the world.

Foundational Skills

Reading
At Herons Dale, reading skills are developed throughout the curriculum and begin with communication, attention and engagement. Pupils are supported to develop early reading behaviours through stories, songs, symbols, sensory experiences and phonics. As children progress, they learn to recognise sounds, words and meanings using approaches such as Song of Sounds, symbol-supported texts and personalised reading activities. Reading is embedded across all topics and daily learning experiences, helping pupils make connections between what they read and the world around them. The way reading is taught is carefully adapted to each pupil's developmental stage and curriculum pathway, ensuring learning is meaningful, accessible and appropriately challenging.

Writing
Writing is viewed as a journey that begins with communication and purposeful mark-making. Pupils develop the physical, communication and thinking skills needed for writing through meaningful, engaging experiences across the curriculum. Children progress from making marks and symbols with meaning to using letters, words and sentences to express their ideas. Writing opportunities are woven throughout topics and everyday activities, allowing pupils to practise and apply their skills in real-life contexts. Teaching approaches vary according to pupils' developmental needs and cohort, ensuring every learner can access writing at the right stage of their journey.

Mathematics
Mathematical understanding is developed through practical, hands-on experiences that help pupils make sense of the world around them. Pupils learn key foundational skills such as sorting, matching, counting, comparing, measuring and recognising patterns before moving on to more complex mathematical concepts. Maths is taught through daily learning opportunities, topic work and real-life experiences such as cooking, outdoor learning and problem-solving activities, helping children develop confidence and independence in using maths in everyday life. The delivery of mathematics is adapted to pupils' developmental stage and curriculum pathway, with learning personalised to build on prior knowledge and support continued progress.

How can you help?

Reading:

Instilling a love of reading at home starts with making books a natural and enjoyable part of everyday life. Set aside time to read together, let your child choose books that match their interests, and create a cozy reading space where they feel comfortable exploring stories. When children see family members reading and talking positively about books, they begin to view reading as a fun and rewarding activity rather than a chore. Small, consistent reading habits can help build a lifelong love of learning and literacy.

Counting:

Helping children develop confidence with counting at home can be simple, fun, and part of everyday routines. Encourage your child to count objects around the house, such as toys, books, steps, or pieces of fruit. Simple activities like counting ingredients while baking, setting the table with the correct number of items, playing board games, or singing counting songs help children see how numbers are used in real life. Keeping counting playful and positive builds number confidence and creates a strong foundation for future maths learning.

Life skills:

Developing life skills at home helps children grow in confidence, independence, and responsibility. Encourage your child to take part in everyday tasks such as helping to prepare simple meals, practising dressing themselves, and using money when shopping. Activities like choosing their clothes, fastening buttons and zips, helping to make a snack, or paying for a small item at a shop provide valuable learning opportunities. By giving children age-appropriate responsibilities and celebrating their successes, you can help them build the practical skills they need for everyday life.

Developing Gross Motor skills:

Gross motor skills are the large movements that use the muscles of the arms, legs, and core. Activities such as climbing, running, jumping, riding a bike, throwing and catching a ball, or visiting the park help children develop strength, balance, coordination, and posture. These skills are important because they provide the stability and control needed for fine motor tasks, such as holding a pencil, using scissors, and forming letters correctly. By encouraging plenty of active play and movement, parents can help build the strong physical foundations that support successful handwriting and other classroom activities.

General Information:

PERSONALISED LEARNING PLAN (PLP)
Your child's Personalised Learning Plan targets for the Autumn term will be sent home in the next couple of weeks.

MCAS
It is very important that you sign up to My Child At School (MCAS) if you have not done so already. If you require any help setting this up, please contact the school office. This is used to send out school letters, for booking parents evenings, updating parental consents and to inform parents of school closures.

EARWIG
You should be receiving one Earwig record every Friday. This record is a snapshot of class learning throughout the week. If you require any help logging in to the website, please contact the school office. At the end of the term, a Learning Journey containing Earwig records will also be sent home.

BREAKFAST
Herons Dale can offer breakfast to all children at the start of the school day. This is available to all and includes a range of cereals, bagels, and spreads. This forms part of our nurture hour, with a focus on communication, developing independence in preparing simple meals and using a spoon independently. If you think this is something you would like us to encourage your child to participate in we just ask that you email, or let the school office know if you would like your child to opt into this, you can of course opt out too.

SNACK TIME
We will have snack twice each day, if you would like to send something in every half- term for the class to share please do so. This could be a box of biscuits, crackers, breadsticks, dried fruit, rice cakes etc. Remember that we are a nut free school.

We encourage all of our children to drink water, however, if your child prefers squash, please could you send in a bottle of squash per term for us to make up for them. We drink frequently through the day and wish to do everything we can to ensure your child is well hydrated at all times.

PERSONAL CARE
As you know we are very hands on in our learning both indoor and out. If not already done, please send in appropriate outdoor weather clothes and footwear and where possible a change of clothes (several if your child has accidents). All clothes, shoes etc. must be clearly labelled. Please send nappies and wipes in if appropriate for your child.

General Information:

COOKING

Your child will be cooking **every OTHER** week on a **Friday**. To help cover the cost of ingredients, we are asking for a voluntary contribution of £1 per child per session. When possible, we will endeavour to send the samples home (if they don't get eaten at afternoon snack).

CHARGING

Just so you are aware, all contributions you make to the school for any activity are entirely voluntary and no child will be excluded from these activities on the basis of non-payment. However, we apologise, but if contributions are not forth coming, we may have to consider reducing the number of sessions or cancelling the activity entirely.

You may either pay weekly or for the whole term. We would prefer you to pay via My Child At School (MCAS) but cash is also acceptable.

Suggested Contributions for AUTUMN 2026:

Cooking: £1 per session £7 for this term

HERONS FOREST

This term we will be accessing Herons Forest every **Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.** Please send a **labelled** kit in with your child in a bag that can stay in school during term time. If it becomes muddy it will be sent home to you that day.

PE KITS

Please send a **labelled** PE kit in with your child in a bag that can stay in school during term time. As a reminder, clearly labelling all your children's clothes, including socks helps greatly in staff keeping track of the whole classes clothing. We will keep the kits for the term, sending them home at the end of half term unless you request otherwise. Our PE day is **Tuesday**.

General Information:

SCHOOL LUNCHES

School lunches are free for children up until Year 2. For children in Year 3 and above school meals are ordered via My Child At School (MCAS). (Please note, this does not apply to parents who are in receipt of Free School Meals). If you believe your child is entitled to Free School Meals , and you have not claimed, please check eligibility via West Sussex - https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/

The price of a school meal is £3.00 a day for a 2-course lunch. There are always 2 choices of a hot meal.

All lunches will need to be pre-ordered and paid for in advance via your My Child At School (MCAS) account. You will be able to order up to a maximum of 6 weeks before a meal is due and a minimum of one day before your child would like to have a meal. If a meal is not ordered, then your child will need to bring in a Packed Lunch from home. A copy of our menu is on our website and on MCAS.

COMMUNICATION

As always, we want you to feel free to contact us with any questions or queries. We may be teaching but will return all calls and e-mails or arrange meetings at the earliest possible convenience (please see the Home School Communication policy for time scales). Class teams will continue to use the home schoolbooks to communicate daily.

KEEP US IN THE LOOP

It is always helpful to know if your child has not slept well, had breakfast or if there has been any upset etc. at home as we can then really tailor the day to help support the immediate needs of the children. If you could just pop a quick note in their bag, tell transport or contact the school via telephone or email, this would be very much appreciated.