# North Star 265,  Term 2, 2026, Week 1

## Notes from our Head:



Dear Parents/Carers,

Our pupils have made a great start to term. I am really looking forward to this term as we look forward to this Autumn term running up to Christmas. We have already had some new pupils joining the school this term and I would like to welcome them.

You might have seen the recent report by the BBC on managing screen time in relation to educational Apps such as Times Tables Rockstars. This has reignited conversations about how much time children spend on screens. As parents and educators, we know that technology can be a fantastic tool for learning. Programmes such as Times Tables Rock Stars,

online reading platforms, educational games, and digital learning resources can help children practise key skills, build confidence, and engage with learning in enjoyable ways.

However, it is important to remember that when it comes to screen use, quality and balance matter more than simply counting minutes.

There is a significant difference between a child spending time on an educational maths platform and scrolling endlessly through social media or watching short-form videos for extended periods.

Educational activities are often purposeful, interactive, and designed to develop cognitive skills. Nevertheless, even high-quality educational screen use should be balanced with other important experiences that support children's development.

Children need a variety of experiences to develop socially, emotionally, and physically. Time spent away from screens allows children to:

- Build relationships with family and friends.
- Develop communication and social skills.
- Engage in physical activity and outdoor play.
- Read books and develop a love of reading.
- Be creative through drawing, building, or imaginative play.
- Improve sleep quality and concentration.

Research consistently shows that healthy routines including exercise, sleep, family interaction, and opportunities for play have a positive impact on children's wellbeing and learning.

Technology is now a normal part of children's lives and education. The goal is not necessarily to eliminate screen use but to help children develop healthy habits and learn how to use technology responsibly.

As a school, we will continue to use carefully selected digital tools to support learning while also promoting reading, physical activity, creativity, and positive relationships. By working together, we can help children enjoy the benefits of technology while maintaining a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

**The key question is not simply "How much screen time?" but "What is my child doing online, and is it balanced with the other things they need to thrive?"**

# Class News

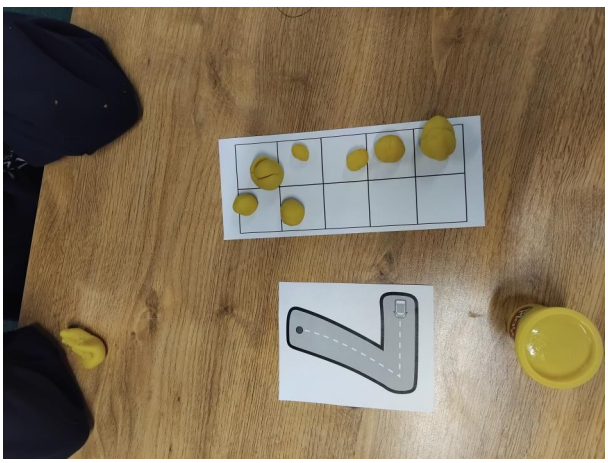


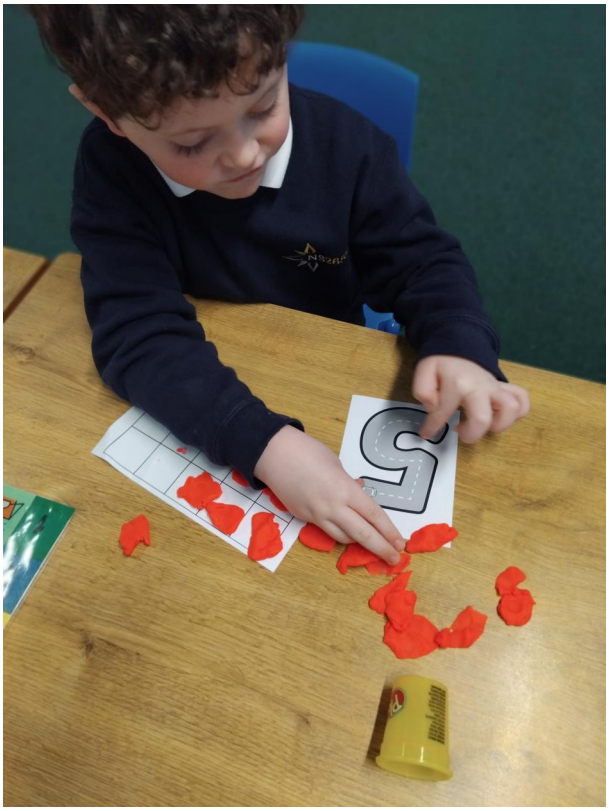
## Acorns

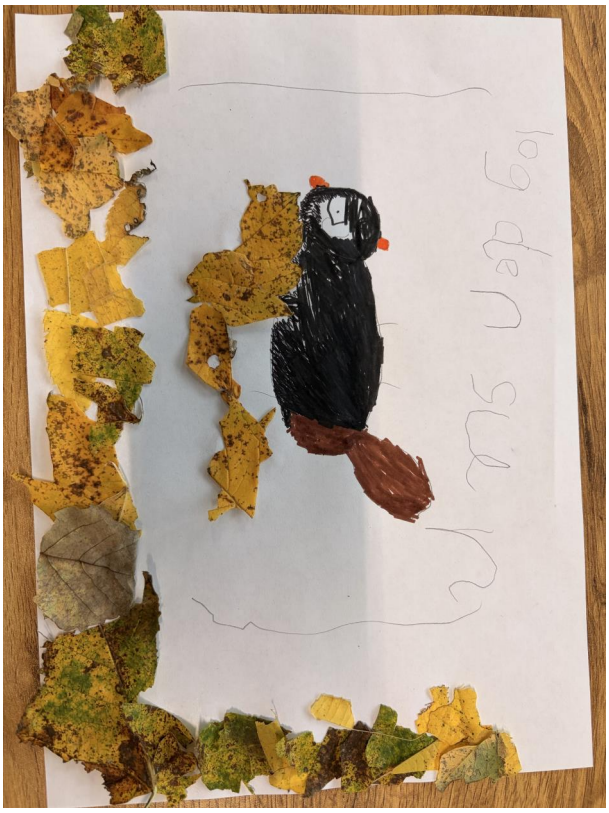
This week at 265 Explorer we have been enjoying our new building! We welcomed Henry, Sollie and Freddie into our new school. We have been working hard on our assessments and setting up our new space.

In Maths, we have been exploring number bonds and working on our number formation with foam and play dough. In Writing, we have been reading Cops and Robbers and drawing and labelling characters from the text.

Freddie worked hard to screw on some wheels onto a chest of drawers with Miss Burgess. Freddie also was the first to get a head teachers award at Explorers, well done Freddie!!







## Conkers

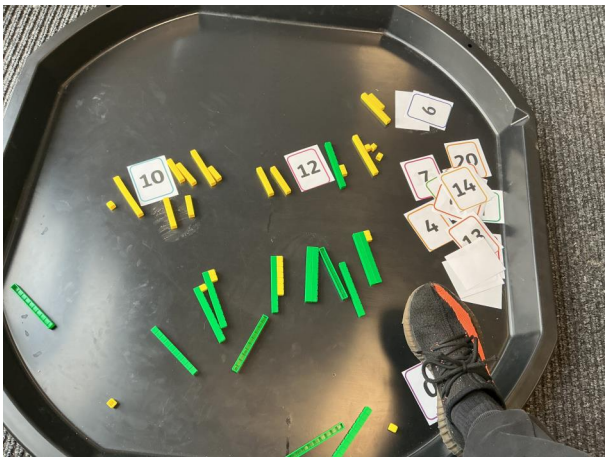
Welcome back, Conker Class! Although we have only had a few days back, the children have done a fantastic job settling back into our school routines and getting stuck straight back into their learning. We have already had some super learning this week!

In **English**, we have continued our work on instructions from last term and have started innovating our class text. The children have been busy designing some very tasty sandwiches, wraps and bagels! We have had all sorts of delicious (and perhaps unusual!) combinations, from bacon to chocolate, salami and pepperoni. I think we might have a few budding chefs in Conker Class!

In **Maths**, we are focusing on the importance of mathematical operations this term. We have been developing some of the key skills that help us build our fluency and become more confident mathematicians.

Our **Project learning** this term is particularly exciting as we turn our attention to our local area of Bristol and explore how transport is used throughout the city. We will be investigating some of Bristol's famous landmarks, including the SS Great Britain and the Clifton Suspension Bridge. We will also explore the history of our local area and get creative by designing and making our very own hot air balloons inspired by the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta!

There are so many exciting things planned for this term, and we can't wait to get stuck in. Well done, Conker Class, for making such a fantastic start to Term 2. We look forward to seeing what adventures and learning the coming weeks bring!




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## Maple

It's been a great first week back in Maple Class, and we have continued building on the academic and social progress made last term. In English, we have been exploring fictional diary entries, which links closely to our new Project topic on travel and transport in Bristol. In Maths, we have been revisiting place value to ensure we have secure foundations before moving on to the four operations.

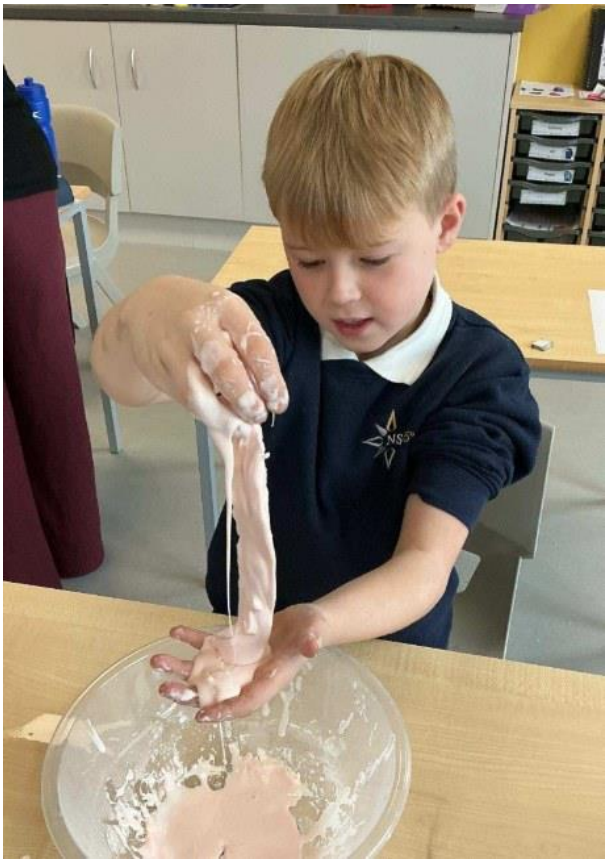
In Science, we explored the properties of solids, liquids and gases and enjoyed making our own Newtonian fluid as part of a practical experiment. During Forest School, we designed and created our own masks, using our creativity and design skills. In PSHE, we challenged our own assumptions and perceptions of others, while our Navigate sessions helped us understand what it means to feel insecure and how we can support ourselves through these feelings.

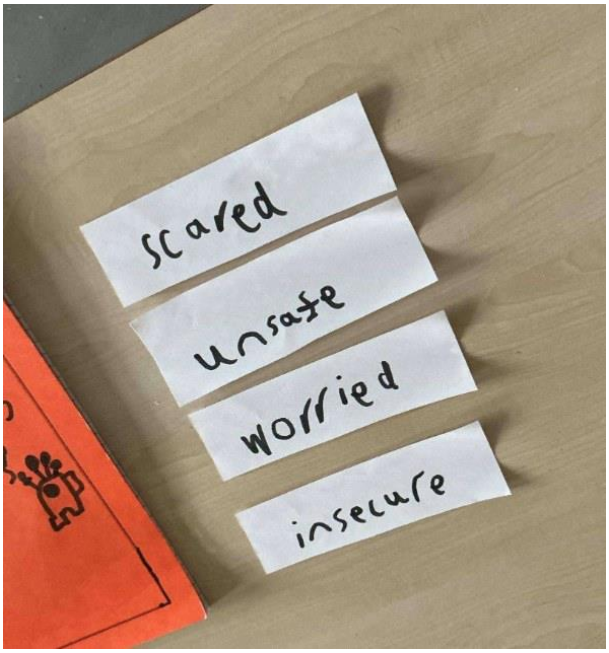
In Cooking, we made delicious chicken pasties whilst practising our culinary skills. We are also looking forward to our first trip of the term next week, when we will be visiting We The Curious as part of our exploration of our local area and our wider topic learning.

We also welcomed a new student to Maple, we're so happy to have you here, Orla! With such an exciting and promising start to the term, I'm looking forward to more learning, friendship and fantastic achievements. Well done, Maple Class!










## Chestnut

Welcome back!

Chestnut class hit the ground running this week with an action-packed return to school. In English, we stepped back in time to explore the history of Bonfire Night, marking the 421st anniversary of the infamous Gunpowder Plot.

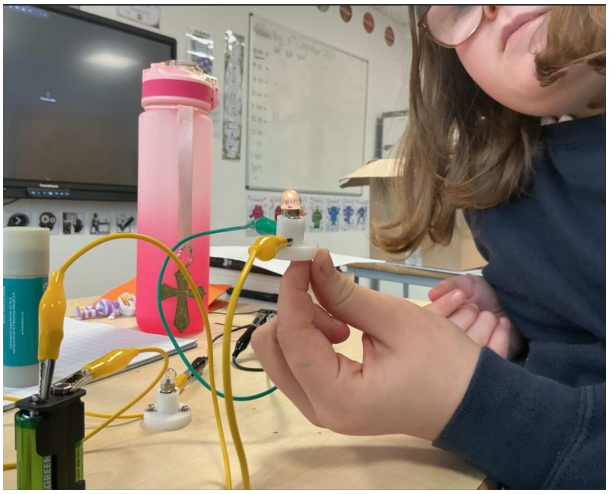
In PE, Mr Bates led us through some fantastic sessions sharpening our football and basketball skills. All that running around also helped us clock up crucial miles for the Run Pudsey 2026 challenge!

Our hands-on learning continued outdoors in Forest School, where we proudly planted Rowan and Cherry trees to brighten up our garden.

Finally, our week ended with a bang or rather, a buzz as we built our own electrical circuits in science. It was a brilliantly loud end to a wonderful week!





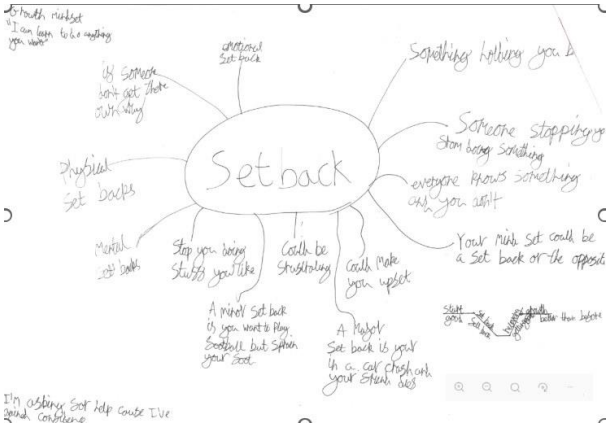


## Oak

Our first week back after half term has been great and we have returned to class and learning seamlessly (almost)! Lenny, Dexter, Violet and Honor started the first lesson back with a diary entry about their week off. This of course included Halloween so was a good opportunity to use all those onomatopoeic words we have been learning such as Spooky, Slimy and Boo!

We have also been practicing writing formal letters in contrast to our fiction prose where we use lots of adjectives and metaphors.  It was great to see the results in such an important life skill.

The other highlight of the week was in our PSHE lesson where we discussed how we can overcome setbacks in life. We made posters to illustrate our conversations and concluded that we can come back stronger and wiser when we have challenges to overcome.




## Lime

Dear parent(s)/carer(s),

I hope you have had a lovely half term. It has been great seeing all the students back in again.

This term our enquiry questions are: **Who rules our country and why is London our capital city?** We will be learning about how democracy works, how Parliament works and what the job is of the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

This term, we will be attending a Creative Industries Fair at the Bristol Beacon and we are also planning a trip to the We the Curious. A letter will be sent home soon with regards to the fair.

This week's cooking featured making delicious brownies.



**PE Weekly Update**

It has been a fantastic start to Term 2 in PE, with students returning after half term full of enthusiasm and ready to get involved!

This term, our focus will be on Football and Basketball, where students will be developing key skills associated with both sports, including passing, receiving, throwing and moving into

space. As always, we will be bringing these skills together through gameplay at the end of our lessons, giving students the opportunity to put their learning into practice in a fun and engaging environment.

It has also been lovely to see some really positive moments of kindness and encouragement across our lessons this week. Students have shown great enthusiasm, supported one another and demonstrated some fantastic attitudes towards their learning. These small moments make a big difference, and it has been great to see!

Our Run Pudsey Marathon Challenge has also got off to a brilliant start! All classes have collectively completed between 10 and 12 miles, which is a fantastic achievement after just one week. We will continue adding up the miles covered during our PE lessons next week, with the aim of completing the full 26.2-mile marathon by Friday 13th November, all in support of BBC Children in Need.

A huge well done to each and every student for the effort, enthusiasm and engagement shown this week. It has been a really positive return after half term, and I look forward to seeing everyone continue in the same vein next week. Keep up the fantastic work! 👏

## E-Safety

**Decoy Apps**

There are many fun and useful games and apps on the internet, but there are also some to beware of.

**What is a Decoy App?**

Decoy apps can be used to hide other apps or messages that children don't want you to see. They look just like useful apps, and are often functional. For example, the calculator app is a working calculator, until you enter a pin number to access the files it is being used to hide. Children who are using apps inappropriate for their age, apps that may be illegal/ being used to commit illegal acts or apps to engage with unsuitable people are likely to hide these behind a decoy app. People trying to groom or recruit children will often suggest they hide the apps and conversations for many reasons, which will seem genuine to the children.

**How to Spot A Decoy App**

A useful tip to be able to tell whether it is a real app or a decoy app is by checking how much memory it uses. A decoy app will use a lot of memory as it will be using it for the apps and files it is hiding. Memory usage can usually be found in the settings on your phone, under storage. If you need any help checking this, please contact us. Below are a few examples of decoy apps for different phones.


iPhone Decoy Apps
Lock Photo+Video Safe App
Private Photos
Hide Photo+Video Safe
Secret Calculator
Private Albums
Private Photo/PCalculator
Photo Safe Pro HD
Private Photo
Android Decoy Apps
Smart Hide Calculator
Leby Vault
Vault-Hide SMS, Pics & Vide
Magic Box
PhotoVault - Hide Pictures
Hide Pictures - Hide It Pro