



THE OLD SCHOOL HENSTEAD

INDEPENDENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL



School Newsletter
Summer Term
18th July 2025



The final week of term was filled with joy, celebration and a touch of emotion as we brought the school year to a close. The children gave a fantastic performance in *The Dream Thief*, a show full of imagination, talent and energy that left the entire audience spellbound. It was a wonderful reminder of how much our pupils grow in confidence and creativity over the year. Speech Day was another special moment - coming together as a school community to celebrate the many achievements of our pupils and to reflect on a year filled with learning, laughter and shared successes.

For our Year 6 pupils, the end of term is always a bittersweet time. As they prepare for their next chapter, we are proud to see how far they've come, even as we prepare to say goodbye. They leave with strong friendships and lasting memories of their time at Henstead, years that we hope they will always look back on with pride and affection. Henstead has always been more than just a school; it is a close-knit community where whole families grow together, and that shared connection is something we treasure deeply.

Wishing you all a restful, happy summer and we look forward to seeing you in September.

- Mrs Sonn





Key Dates:

Monday and Tuesday 1st and 2nd September - staff training (no pupils)

Wednesday 3rd September - term begins

Friday 19th September - Jeans for Genes Day

Friday 26th September - harvest festival at St. Mary's church (8.45am)

Full details regarding each of these events will be provided nearer the time and more dates will be added weekly.



Nursery Sports Day







Junior School - Mrs Dakin's Class





Junior School Conservation Day

The children joined senior school pupils at Carlton Marshes for our conservation day! On arrival, they went for a walk onto the marshes, aiming for the tallest hide. However, their journey was impeded by a family of swans who had nested on the path! They had to take the longer route through the woodland to the hide, so they definitely got a lot of steps in!

Once at the hide, everyone had a go at using the binoculars to search for wildlife, whilst Mr Hunter pointed out human and physical features of the landscape. After this, the children retraced their steps whilst completing a sound and sight scavenger hunt. They had to work in pairs to capture pictures and videos of everything on their list. (Back at school, they turned their footage into an iMovie during computing lessons).

After lunch and a quick play on the playpark, they set back out with their teachers, armed with a wide selection of bug-hunting equipment. The staff at Carlton had tipped them off about an excellent bug-hunting spot near the boundary, which paid off, as throughout the afternoon the children caught everything from woodlice to grasshoppers! It was definitely the firm favourite activity of the day and has inspired lots of conversations about how they could do more bug hunting at school too!

We are proud of how well even the youngest pupils at Henstead comport themselves when out on a trip. Well done everyone!

- Mrs Braidwood







Senior School - Mrs Braidwood's Class

After completing our assessments, we have been focusing on persuasive language and public speaking in our debate topic. The children all chose an 'unpopular opinion' that they had to write a persuasive speech on to convince the rest of the class. They chose topics that ranged from 'Swimming in cold water is better than hot water' to 'Japan is the coolest country' and included alliteration, repetition, emotive language, contrast and rhetorical questions to help convey their opinions.

Well done, everyone!

- Mrs Braidwood





Senior School Conservation Day

As soon as we arrived at the Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve we were whisked out onto the marsh for a morning of Dyke dipping. The children worked in pairs to dip for invertebrates and then viewed them under a magnifier to classify them. It was a successful activity and we caught everything from water boatmen to dragonfly nymphs. We even collected a couple of fish! To complete this activity, they played the 'food chain game' where they had to be a range of creatures in the food chain and collect the most food without the predators catching them - Louis reigned supreme at the top of the food chain as a dragonfly nymph!

The children then headed into the shady woodland to complete some tree classification, which they did in the fastest time the staff at Carlton had ever seen a school group complete! We then collected leaves from a range of trees and created a leaf rubbing art piece each, before working in teams to complete a scavenger hunt around the woodland.

After lunch and a quick play on the playground were taught how to use a compass. Once the children had calibrated their compasses they had to play the compass game - Hazel was lightning-fast and impressed everyone with her compass knowledge. Following this, the pupils had to select both the physical and human features they could see on the marshes and identify the direction they were in, from the visitor centre. Finally, they worked in teams to identify the weather through cloud classification, determining wind direction and speed. All of the pupils worked extremely hard and showed Henstead off at its best. Well done, everyone!

- Mrs Braidwood





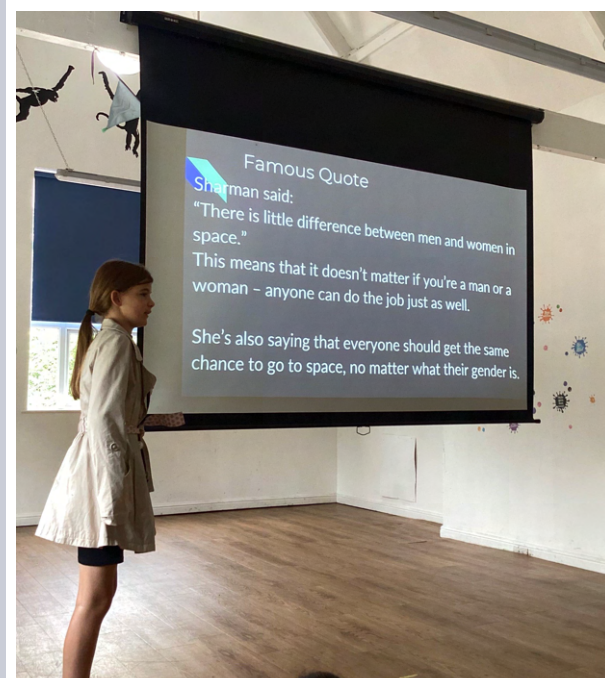


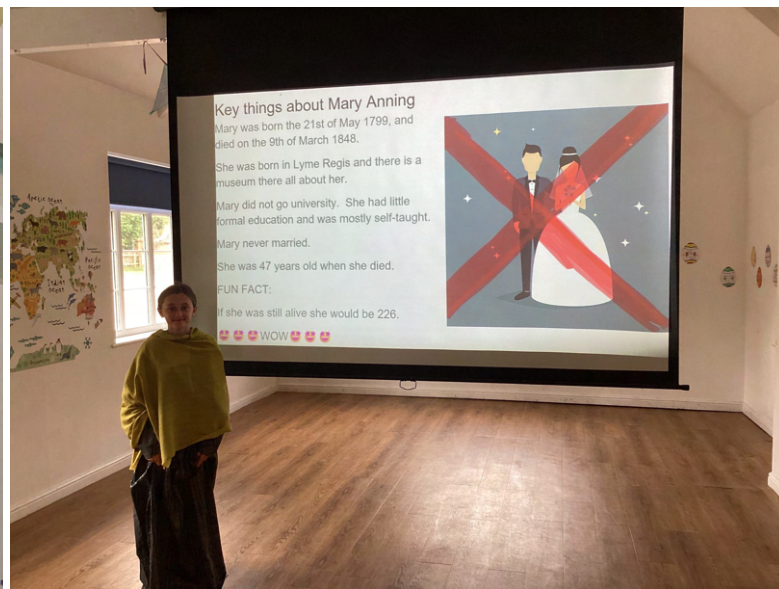
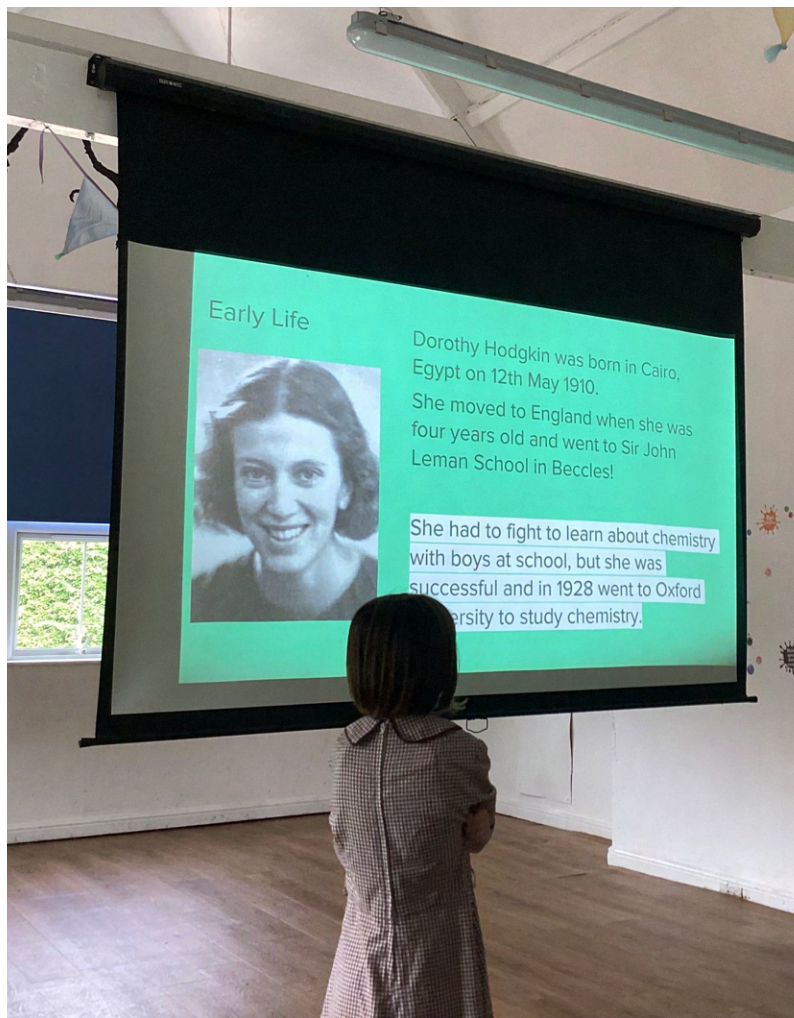
Senior School - Mrs Sonn's Class

This half-term, the Year 5 & 6 pupils have been busy combining their research and tech skills in a fantastic project focused on Great British Scientists. Each pupil selected a scientist who made a significant impact on the world and set out to discover more about their life and achievements. Using a combination of internet research and digital presentation tools, they created informative, engaging presentations that were not only factually rich but also beautifully designed. These are vital skills that will serve them well as they move on to their next schools, where independent learning, digital literacy and confident communication are key to success.

To top it all off, they donned costumes and presented their work during assembly this week, speaking with poise, clarity and professionalism. It was a real treat to learn more about incredible figures such as Sir David Attenborough, Rosalind Franklin, Mary Anning, Dorothy Hodgkin, Alan Turing, Sir Isaac Newton, and Helen Sharman. Good work, Years 5 & 6. You've all proved that science really is elementary!

- Mrs Sonn







Sports Day

The weather was kind to us for Sports Day, and with the sun shining and spirits high, all signs pointed to a brilliant day of competition and camaraderie. The morning saw pupils taking part in field events including long jump, high jump and ball throw, where focus and determination were on full display. One of the loudest moments came during the inter-house tug of war - a real highlight that brought out the competitive spirit in every year group. There was no shortage of shouting, roaring, huffing and puffing as houses battled it out with enthusiasm and grit.

The afternoon was dedicated to track events, with pupils giving their all in a series of races across the board. Our Nursery children also joined in with great enthusiasm, enjoying the sense of occasion alongside their older peers, and the slip and slide sponge relay was a particular high point!

The parents' races added an extra layer of excitement, with mums and dads showing plenty of competitive spirit - and more than a few determined sprints - as they battled it out for a bit of friendly glory.

Congratulations to Yare, who were crowned overall winners. And in the spirit of good sportsmanship (and just a bit of mischief), all the house captains were on the receiving end of a well-deserved soaking. A fantastic end to a day that was truly on track for success!









Summer Show

Here are some wonderful moments captured from this year's summer production of *The Dream Thief*.











Speech Day

Our picnic on the field and Speech Day was a wonderful way to conclude the school year. The pupils were thrilled to receive their well-deserved certificates and prizes, and we shared a heartfelt and emotional farewell with our Year 6 leavers. Their speeches were deeply moving, reflecting on how much they cherished their time at Henstead and how well prepared they feel for the next chapter of their educational journey.

We were also delighted to welcome back former Headmaster Mike Hewett and his wife, June. Having led the school for 22 years, Mr Hewett was the perfect guest to present the prizes and share fond memories of his time guiding the Henstead community. We extend our sincere thanks to Mr and Mrs Hewett for joining us and contributing to such a memorable occasion.

The time finally came for our oldest pupils to board the party bus and set off on their final trip together, with everyone's heartfelt goodbyes echoing in their ears as they drove away - a perfect end to a perfect afternoon.





Achievements

A huge well done to Anna, who impressed us all by winning a silver medal at her recent club gymnastics competition!



*We wish you all a
wonderful summer!*





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