



# CASTLES & KNIGHTS



LOWER SCHOOL  
PATHWAY 1  
SPRING 1

## ENGLISH

Students will focus on Traditional Tales, exploring familiar features such as beginning, middle, and end, a setting and characters. Traditional tales use rich, patterned language that builds vocabulary, understand sentence structure, and develops storytelling skills.



## PSHE

We will explore friendship, bravery and respect. We will discuss knightly values: loyalty, courage and kindness. We will learn about fairness and rules and consider carefully the roles within Medieval society.

## SCIENCE

This half term, we will explore materials and their properties. Students will investigate a range of materials that could or could not be used to build a castle. Students will test the materials for strength, flexibility and whether appropriate.

## MATHS

Students will continue to focus on place value and the four operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. These skills will be taught using a range of resources, methods, and games to strengthen understanding.

# SPRING 1

## ANIMALS PATHWAY (KS2 & KS3)

### Castles & Knights

This half term, our topic is Castles and Knights. We will be exploring this exciting theme across the curriculum to make learning as meaningful and engaging as possible.

Students will take part in an Educational experience where they will see a range of related historical artefacts.

## COMPUTING

Students will develop their understanding of their safe and appropriate use of the internet. We will develop our skills of research, use a range of search engines, digital literacy and citizenship.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Students will explore how different cultures and religions show their beliefs and the importance of symbolism. We will learn about the role of religion in medieval life and the Christian festivals celebrated in castles. We will discuss good deeds and moral choices from religious stories.

## HUMANITIES

Students will locate, real castles across the UK. They will have real and virtual experiences a further develop their mapping skills. Students will explore the different roles within a castle. Study armour, weapons and daily life in medieval times. They will compare castles then and now.

# ABOUT THE LOWER SCHOOL

In the Lower School, everything we do is carefully planned to prepare students for increasing independence and a successful transition into Key Stage 4, where the focus becomes Preparing for Adulthood. By the time they leave KS3, your child will have:

- Teaching tailored to each student's EHCP, with progress regularly reviewed and support adapted to ensure meaningful, personalised progress
- A growing awareness of their own strengths, interests and aspirations
- An understanding of how exams work in preparation for gaining qualifications
- The confidence to begin planning for their future, supported by staff who know them well
- Begin to work more independently, taking greater ownership of their learning and daily routines
- Developed self-care skills, such as personal hygiene, emotional regulation and understanding healthy choices
- An understanding of e-safety, including how to stay safe online, recognise risks and use technology responsibly
- Know how to keep themselves safe in the community, including what to do in an emergency and who to go to for help
- Developed the social, communication and life skills needed to move confidently into Key Stage 4
- Be able to show compassion and kindness towards others, demonstrating empathy and respectful behaviour
- An understanding of the importance of caring for the world we live in, including animals, the environment and making responsible choices
- The skills to socialise appropriately with peers and adults, including taking turns, understanding personal boundaries and showing respect
- The knowledge to keep themselves safe in the community, including road safety, stranger awareness and making safe choices

The Lower School is all about making progress, building confidence and independence and ensuring students have a clear sense of direction.



# WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS

Class	05/01/26	12/01/26 - 09/02/26
Otters	Art & Small Animal Care	Cooking & Forest School
Lemurs	Forest School & Art	Small Animal Care & Outdoor Adventures
Red Pandas	Cooking & Performing Arts	Team Building & Animal Care
Tigers	Outdoor Adventure & Cooking	Forest School & Art
Capybaras	Small Animal Care & Forest School	Outdoor Adventures & Team Building
Butterflies	Performing Arts & Outdoor Adventure	Art & Cooking

# THURSDAY AFTERNOONS

From next half term, there will be a new PE structure on Thursdays, while Monday sessions will remain unchanged. In response to parent and pupil feedback, we are introducing an A/B rota, where the pathway will be divided into two groups that will alternate having PE each week. This ensures students still access an average of two hours of physical activity weekly, in line with government recommendations. When students are not taking part in PE, they will engage in targeted activities designed to support progress towards their individual EHCP outcomes.

	Classes partaking in PE	Dates for PE lessons
<b>Group A</b>	Butterflies Red Pandas Tigers	15/01/26 29/01/26 12/02/26
<b>Group B</b>	Otters Lemurs Capybaras	8/01/26 22/01/26 05/02/26

# CASTLES & KNIGHTS

This half term, our topic is Castles and Knights. We will be exploring this exciting theme across the curriculum to make learning as meaningful and engaging as possible for our students. Research shows that children learn best when their experiences connect to their interests, so we have designed lessons that build links between subjects and allow plenty of opportunities for revisiting key concepts. This repetition helps to ensure that learning is consolidated and that students develop a deep understanding – enabling them to describe, explain, and apply what they have learned. We look forward to sharing exciting moments with you and your child and weekly newsletters will continue to provide you with information from the week that has passed.

## English

During this half term, students will be exploring traditional tales. Students will share reading a range of traditional tales discussing and writing about the characters, settings and the moral of the story which could include themes like kindness, honesty, bravery and consequences of actions. Students will retell events in order, boosting memory and thinking skills. Adults will support students with shared and modelled writing to build their confidence ready to write either their own or retell a traditional tale, which includes a beginning, middle and ending.

## Maths - Group 1

Students will continue to develop their recognition of coins and notes, as well as their ability to count totals and use different coins and notes to represent amounts. They will also build on their understanding of place value within 20, using a range of practical resources. In addition, students will work on key number skills such as counting, finding one more and one less, identifying numbers before and after, estimating, comparing, and ordering numbers.

Students will further develop their accuracy when completing addition and subtraction within 20. This includes revisiting number bonds to 20, doubles and near doubles, subtracting, finding the difference, counting back, and solving missing-number problems. These activities will help to strengthen their confidence and fluency in early number skills.

## Maths - Group 2

Students will continue to develop their ability to compare amounts of money, calculate totals, make £1, find change, and solve two-step problems. They will also begin to work on multiplication and division in small steps, focusing on equal groups, grouping and sharing, using arrays, and learning the 2, 5, and 10 times tables along with their related division facts. Students will use a range of practical resources and real-life contexts to support their learning and TT Rock Stars.

## Memorable Experience

At the beginning of the half term, we will send out a scroll invitation inviting pupils to dress up as someone from the medieval period. For one day, the classroom will be transformed into a castle complete with a courtyard. Staff will also be dressed up and will greet students with a trumpeted fanfare. Throughout the day, pupils will take part in a range of themed activities, including shield and banner making, medieval feast preparation, a “build a castle” zone, jousting practice, and castle-life role play.

### Science

Students will explore and name and identify common materials. Students will describe the properties of materials using scientific vocabulary e.g., hard, soft, stretchy, rough, smooth, waterproof, absorbent, transparent, translucent and opaque. Students will investigate the materials and have a go at building a small wall or bridge that will be tested for its structure, strength and safety.

### Humanities

Students will explore the role of different people in a castle, study armour, weapons, and daily life in mediaeval times and also compare castles then and now.

Pupils will learn about real castles in the UK (e.g. Windsor, Warwick and Dover), location of these castles, and develop map skills with a castle theme.

### Physical Education

This half term pupils in Panda class will be taking part in Gymnastics lessons, while Butterflies class will be doing OAA (outdoor adventurous activities) lessons.

Gymnastics lessons will include pupils exploring space and body movement, as well as travel, both on mats and over obstacles. OAA lessons will give pupils the chance to problem solve, work as a team, and improve their appreciation and understanding of the outdoors.

### Religious Education

Students will discuss and explore the role of religion in medieval life (churches, chapels in castles) They will learn about Christian festivals celebrated in castles, discuss good deeds and moral choices from religious stories.

### Drama

Drama will be taught across the curriculum in the form of role play. Students will take on the role of characters from stories and perform in role using a range of props.

### PSHE

This half term in PSHE, we will focus on managing feelings, and changing and growing including topics such as friendship, bravery and respect. Students will look at similarities, differences and diversity among people.

### Art

Students will have the choice to design and create either a knight's shield or a castle's stained glass window using a range of art resources. Students will draw a 2-D dragon on paper thinking about shape and lines, students will then use clay to make a sculpture of their design learning about shape, texture, form and 3D design. Students will experiment with tools to add fine details to their dragon sculpture.

## Computing

Students develop their research skills, exploring the difference between using physical resources and the internet. There will be a focus on search engine skills, digital literacy and citizenship, and understanding the purpose of the internet. The unit will recap how to stay safe when using the internet and the importance of accessing age-appropriate content.

## Team Building

Students will develop their collaborative skills by working together to solve problems and make compromises in order to achieve success. They will communicate and justify their ideas with one another, demonstrating reasoning skills and perseverance when faced with challenges and difficult situations.

## Outdoor Adventure

In Spring 1, students will be developing key teamwork and communication skills through a range of outdoor and practical activities. They will work together to solve simple challenges, take on different team roles and use a variety of communication methods. Activities such as team relays, building a mini wildlife hotel, preparing an outdoor picnic and taking part in boat building and races will help students build confidence, strengthen their problem-solving and develop a sense of belonging and shared purpose.

## Forest School

This term, we will be focusing on developing survival skills during our lessons. Students will build on previously learned techniques as they design and build shelters, cook selection of food on the fire and learn about knots and rope safety. We will also be going out of school to let students play and explore the local woods.

## Cooking

In Cooking, students will continue to build and develop a wide range of practical skills. We will focus on kitchen safety, food hygiene and the correct storage of food. Students will learn how to follow recipes carefully, including how to cut ingredients safely using good hand-eye coordination. We will also emphasise the importance of being organised and prepared when working in the kitchen.

## Homework Themes

- Design and label a medieval coat of armour and crest.
- Create posters around friendship and respect.
- Draw a map of your castle and courtyard with a key.
- Write a diary as a knight, servant or prince/princess.

## Small Animal Care

This half term, students will be learning about grooming animals and trimming their nails as part of their small animal care topic. They will explore the different types of equipment used for grooming, including brushes and nail clippers, and learn why each tool is important. Students will practise how to brush animals safely and gently, as well as learn the correct and safe way to trim an animal's nails. This will help them understand how grooming supports an animal's health, comfort, and wellbeing.

## Wider Reading

- Books related to castles and traditional tales and stories.
- Themes of friendships and everyday feelings .

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Class Photos	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> January
Safer Internet Week	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
Half Term	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February