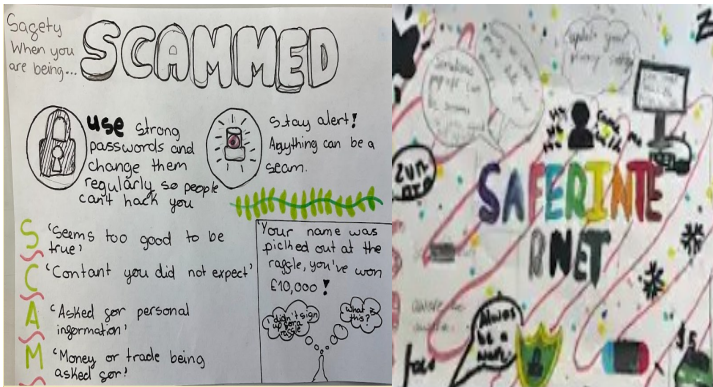




Old Palace Newsletter

Jan & Feb 2025

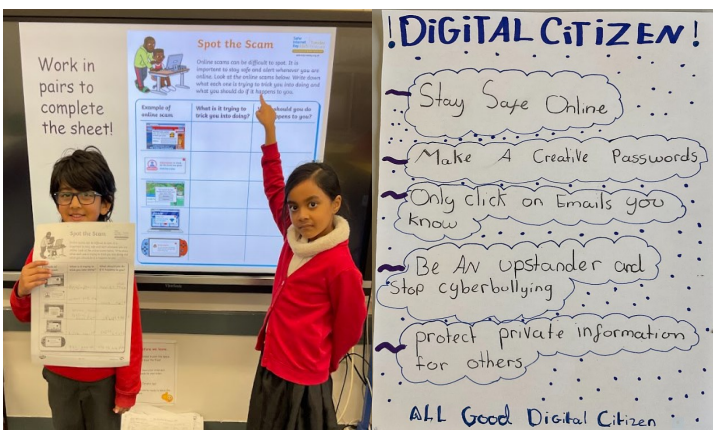
INTERNET SAFETY WEEK



From 10-14th February, we joined schools across the UK in celebrating Safer Internet Day, which promotes the safe and responsible use of technology. Using the internet safely and positively is a key message that we promote in school and celebrating Safer Internet Day is a great opportunity for us to re-emphasise the online safety messages which we deliver throughout the year. Classes carried out a range of activities based around the theme 'Too Good to be True,' which highlighted scamming on the internet and what children can do to protect themselves. Also, in the sessions, age appropriate



apps were addressed, along with how to be a good digital citizen. We also held Parents Workshops, where we spoke more about online safety and the things to be aware of (in particular certain online apps, such as Roblox and YouTube Shorts) and how parents can support the internet being used safely at home. Parents of children in Y1-4 also had the opportunity to visit classes and join in part of the lesson with their child. Please click [HERE](#) to view our workshop presentations: Also, here are the links of ways to report any concerns with online safety: The Report Harmful Content website can help you with issues such as cyberbullying, impersonation and threats. Click [HERE](#) for more information. You can report worrying behaviour towards children to <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/> School related issues - take a screenshot and email it to the school admin@oldpalace.towerhamlets.sch.uk



IMPORTANT DATES



Possible Eid Closure
Monday 31st March 2025

END OF SPRING TERM
School finishes at **2pm** Thursday 3rd April 2025
Return to school Tuesday 22nd April 2025

MAY BANK HOLIDAY
School Closed 5th May 2025

Please visit our school website for a full list of term dates for 2024-25 www.oldpalaceprimary.co.uk



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NIGHT AT THE PANTOMIME



This half term year 4 and 5 had the opportunity to go and see the pantomime 'The Little Mermaid' at the Peacock theatre. The company PWC, in collaboration with Sadler Wells, kindly put on the event and donated 90 children's tickets to our school. They also provided the transport to and from the theatre! The children had an incredible time at the show. They were fascinated by the incredible talent of all the actors, actresses and dancers! They enjoyed interacting with the characters, cheering, booing (at the baddies), singing along and repeating the mantra of Sandy Bottoms 'only good vibes here!' It was a wonderful experience for our pupils, providing inspiration for their own acting and creativity. We are really thankful to PWC for providing the children with this opportunity and to the staff who gave up their time to accompany the children.

STAR CITIZENS - SPRING A

We would like to congratulate the following pupils for achieving the star citizen award this term. Well Done and keep up the good work.

Reception	RB Abrar & RP Kawthar
Year One	1C Yahya & 1T Khadijah
Year Two	2H Aisha & 2O Nuwairah
Year Three	3K Alizah & 3S Sofia
Year Four	4D Khaalisah H & 4M Safa D
Year Five	5D Ruqayyah & 5H Faiha
Year Six	6A Inaya & 6G Hunaifrah

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

COFFEE MORNINGS & PARENT WORKSHOPS

Board Games

Our first coffee morning of 2025, on 9th January, kicked off with a social event: board games. It was a fun coffee morning, as parents showed off their skills and competitiveness at a range of board games.

Energy: Cost of Living

On 16th January, Florida, ran a coffee morning on 'Energy & Cost of Living'. The session focused on energy usage, energy effective appliances and how small changes can save energy. If families require support with their personal finances, help is available— please contact the Bromley by Bow Centre by emailing empower@bbbc.org.uk. This service can provide in-depth 1:1 advice on alleviating debts, negotiating payment plans and more

Minor Ailments Workshop



On 27th January, Dr Rebecca Scott GP, a Clinical Lead from the Bromley by Bow Health Centre, came along to discuss minor ailments. As an ice breaker parents were asked to sort minor illnesses into those that could be treated by a pharmacist and those which required a GP appointment. Parents were shocked to learn that most could be

treated by the pharmacist, saving time, as they did not need to go through the process of trying to get a GP appointment and taking the child out of school. Dr Scott explained that the pharmacist would give the exact same medical advice as a doctor. If the pharmacist thought a second opinion was needed, they would advise the parent to see their GP. Remember the school is also able to administer medication, including paracetamol to help manage cold and flu symptoms. Please bring the medication to the school office, where you will be asked to sign a form to provide your consent.

Connecting Communities Workshop



The Connecting Communities Project, continued with the delivery of a second session aimed at enhancing digital literacy skills. This time, the families had the opportunity to learn about emails and attachments. The training aimed to provide practical skills that can help families navigate the digital world with confidence. Thank you to all the families that attended. The next session is booked for Thursday 3rd

April 9-10am, Lower Hall.

Healthy Families

On 14th January, Hamida Begum from the Parent & Family Support Service in Tower Hamlets, delivered a session on 'Healthy Families.' She shared practical tips on how parents can make small changes that positively impact their family's health and wellbeing. These included a discussion of meal and portion size, the need to be aware of hidden sugars and ways to get the whole family more active. Hopefully these tips will come in handy, especially with Ramadan approaching.

ESOL Class

This half term, Old Palace School will continue its partnership with Idea Store to offer ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. These classes are designed for parents who wish to improve their English skills. If you're interested in signing up, please speak with Shelly or Florida to learn more about the registration process.

Embroidery

On Monday, 20th January, we held our first Embroidery Session for mums, as part of a community project through the Bromley By Bow Centre, funded by Tower Hamlets Council. Stephanie Tillman, the tutor for this project, taught the basics skills of embroidery, and now the mums are working together on a larger project to embroider the Old Palace School logo. It has been incredible to witness how everyone's creativity and confidence has flourished, and we can't wait to see the finished piece. A big thank you to all the mums who have been attending and showing such dedication to the project.

Building Strong Foundations: Parenting Course

On 4th February, Florida, delivered a parenting course focused on boundaries, routines, and positive behaviour. The session provided parents with practical strategies for setting healthy boundaries, establishing consistent routines, and using effective behaviour techniques. The course aimed to empower parents with the tools and knowledge needed to support their children's development and wellbeing in a positive, structured environment. Those who attended found the session helpful, as it provided an opportunity to share experiences and take away valuable ideas. A big thank you to all the parents who participated. If you're interested in joining the next parenting course, please speak to Florida.

Free School Meals Workshop

On the 6th February, Foundation Stage parents were invited to attend an information session on how to apply for Free School Meals. In Tower Hamlets all pupils receive a free school dinner, but some pupils are eligible for extra funding if their parents are on universal credit. Confusingly this is also referred to as Free School Meal entitlement. Shelly, our Parent Support Worker was on hand to help parents apply for this additional school funding using the LBTH online application form. Parents who were not able to complete an application on site were offered a 1:1 appointments at a later date. To check your eligibility, please complete the FSM application available [HERE](#)



Mindfulness for Dad's

On Tuesday 28th January we launched a 'Dads Mindfulness' programme, led by David



Corbishley, co-founder of HumanettiQ, which aims to boost physical and mental health through four pillars: mindfulness, meditation, mind-set and self defense. The sessions aim to increase confidence and fitness by teaching mixed martial arts and practical self

-defense, alongside breathing techniques and meditation to help improve emotional control and relieve stress. They also work on improving mind-set, in order to develop clear strategies which will strengthen mental health, energy levels, relationships and how to positively impact the world around them. These sessions are run fortnightly on Tuesdays from 9:30-10:30. If you are interested to take part please speak to Shelly/ Florida.

Dads' Badminton

These sessions are held fortnightly on Tuesdays 9:30-10:30 (when Dads' Mindfulness sessions are not taking place. For more information, please speak to Shelly/ Florida.

Walking Group

Gentle reminder: our 'Walking Group' continues to be held every Monday 9am-10am. The meeting point is in the Key Stage 2 playground—with Spring on the way, please can come and join us to gain some extra exercise and make new friends.

CORE VALUE AWARD - FEBRUARY 2025

- The value of the month for February was **RESILIENCE**. Congratulations to:
 - Reception:** RB Kabir & RP Laiba
 - Year 1:** 1C Ahnaf & 1T Rahat
 - Year 2:** 2H Salah & 2O Sara
 - Year 3:** 3K Safiyah & 3S Ilyanah
 - Year 4:** 4D Ariba & 4M Rihwan
 - Year 5:** 5D Ayra & 5H Sabrina
 - Year 6:** 6A Priam & 6G Ayah
- Our Core Value for March will be **Courage**.



BOOK WEEK 2025

Old Palace Primary School will be celebrating World Book Week from 3rd to 7th March. During this exciting week, children will have the opportunity to learn about an author and enjoy reading one of their books.

Key Dates for Your Calendar:

Monday 3rd March	<p>Reception, Year 1 Bedtime Story Time: 3.45pm—4.30pm Due to Ramadan, Bedtime Story has been bought forward to an earlier time so all families can join the activity. We invite children and their parents to stay after school for a bedtime story session. The children will be grouped into small groups, each led by a staff member during storytime, with milk and cookies provided as treats. Before the session, children will have a short break on the playground, after which teachers will guide them to the upstairs hall. It is important that all children are accompanied by a parent or carer.</p> <p>Whole School Competition Launch Your child will bring home details about the competition on Monday. They will need to: Draw a picture of their favourite book and write a reason why it's their favourite. All entries must be submitted to their teacher by Wednesday, 5th March. Certificates for the best entries will be awarded on Friday.</p>
Wednesday 5th March	<p>Parent Workshop – 9:00-10:00 AM Join us as we: Launch our Aspiring Authors magazine. Explore reading practices within our school. Share tips to support your child's reading at home. Introduce authors your child may enjoy reading with you.</p> <p>Book Tokens £1 Book tokens will be given out to children to bring home at the end of the day.</p>
Thursday 6th March	<p>Book Fair This year, the book fair will have two time slots for purchasing books: 8:50–9:10: Reception & Year 1 3:30–4:00: Year 2 – Year 6</p> <p>Please note that the book fair is a cash only event.</p>
Friday 7th March	<p>Dress up Children can come dressed up as their favourite book character</p> <p>Reception Parents Morning Reading 8:45-9:10 Reception parents will be able to come in and listen to their children telling the story using story maps.</p>
Throughout the week	<p>The children will be taking part in a variety of tasks, including researching their favourite author, reading one of their books and some art activities.</p>

YEAR 5 EQUALITY TEACH WORKSHOP



Year 5 participated in a workshop called Think! Which was delivered by Equaliteach. This was designed to develop critical thinking skills and to challenge stereotypes and misinformation. The children undertook a variety of activities, which included group work, paired tasks and individual reflections, designed to challenge the children's preconceptions of people based on a single characteristic. It helped them to understand that our assumptions about people can often be wrong. As a school we promote a message of kindness. It is wrong to discriminate and to be hurtful to one another. Please support us by also promoting this key message at home.

YEAR 6 FIRST AID TRAINING



In Science, year 6 have been learning about how to look after the body and mind. To support this, the school provided First Aid training, as this is an important life skill. The children learned the steps to follow in an emergency situation (DRS ABC).

The training focused on how to stay calm and confident while helping someone in need, as well as who to call for assistance. The children had the opportunity to practice performing CPR, which helped them feel better prepared to take the appropriate actions in an emergency. The session was very informative and may help to save a life. The school has a defibrillator, which is located outside the office, in the event of an emergency.

TWO WEEK OCTOBER HALF TERM



During one of the Parent Council meetings, it was requested that the school look into the possibility of adjusting the term dates, to provide a two week half term break during October.

Some schools, such as Central Foundation have done this for a few years and Marnier will start it from next year. The autumn term is the longest of the year, often 15 weeks or longer! Having a two week October half term supports pupil and staff wellbeing and improve attendance. It also provides families with an additional opportunity to take an extended holiday, at a time when prices are cheaper and before temperatures rise in southern Asia.

Schools must open to pupils for 190 days in each academic year. Changing the dates would not effect the number of teaching days and the holidays would be in line with the schools mentioned above and Children's House. The proposed dates for 2025-26 are:

Autumn 1: Tuesday 2nd September - Friday 17th October
 Autumn 2: Monday 3rd November - Friday 19th December
 Spring 1: Tuesday 6th January 2026 - Friday 13th February
 Spring 2: Monday 23rd February - Friday 27th March
 Summer 1: Monday 13th April - Friday 22nd May
 Summer 2: Monday 1st June - Thursday 23rd July
 The school would close for Eid-al-Fitr.
 Eid-al-Adha would fall within the summer half term break

Governors believe that this would be a positive change, but wish to ensure that parents have an opportunity to express their views. If you would like to share any feedback on the proposal, we would be grateful if this could be done by Wednesday 4th March, either by speaking to the office, to the senior leaders by the gate, or to Shelly and Forida in the playground or during this Thursday's coffee morning.

attendance MATTERS

To further promote excellent attendance the school has introduced some new incentives. At the end of each half term, children who have significantly improved their attendance will now receive an improved attendance good news slip to celebrate this achievement- we handed out 87 slips in Spring 1! Each class will also have the opportunity to earn free choice time, gaining 5 minutes for each week that the class meets or exceeds our attendance target of 97%. We will also continue to celebrate attendance with silver (99%) and gold (100%) pencils at the end of each term and an attendance prize in July for pupils who have achieved 100% attendance across the year. If you require support with your child's attendance please let us know. Shelly and Sonia (the local authority Attendance & Welfare adviser) are happy to help. We noticed an increase in missed days due to minor ailments last term - remember these do not always require time off school. We are adding an attendance display to the playground noticeboard and really appreciate your help in keeping missed days to a minimum.

What do your attendance figures actually mean?

95%	=	47 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 8 days in total or 1 week and 3 days
90%	=	95 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 16 days in total or 3 weeks and 1 day
85%	=	142 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 24 days in total or 4 weeks and 4 days
80%	=	190 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 32 days in total or 6 weeks and 2 days

Where we have been tracking the punctuality of pupils who are repeatedly late, we have seen a big improvement. This just goes to show what can be achieved when home and school work together.

FREE TRY TENNIS WITH Courtside

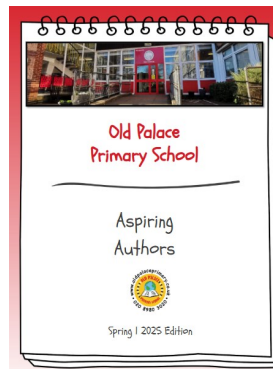
AT VICTORIA PARK
SATURDAY 16TH MARCH
10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm

FREE time on court for children & adults looking to try tennis for the first time.

No need to book - we've got the rackets ready for some fun!



OLD PALACE ASPIRING AUTHORS



We are lucky to have some very talented writer at Old Palace. Previously we displayed the children's writing in the corridors, but this meant that only visitors to the school got to celebrate the children's work. To address this we are launching a half termly magazine which will celebrate the children's writing. The first edition of our Aspiring Authors magazine will come out tomorrow and will contain two examples of writing from each year group in KS2. The children who have been selected should feel very proud and we hope you will enjoy reading their contributions. We will text out a link and also save the magazine on our school website.

YEAR 5 NEWSPAPER DAY

Daily British News!

Tom Cruise Cancels Squirrel role!


By @BBCNews at 11:02 AM on 12 June

In an amazing new movie created by some teens based on their director, and actor Nancy and Gareth, the amazing Tom Cruise was asked to be a squirrel!

(Tom Cruise born July 3 1962) is an American actor and producer. He has starred in many movies and is one of the most paid actors in Hollywood! John, the director, wanted to show that disabled people like him can make amazing movies too! Nancy reported sadly that it was no but they were very close to persuading him!

Gareth added that Tom said he was busy. He was probably jumping off of a building or something, but that's no way as cool as being a squirrel!

Maybe in their next astonishing movie Tom Cruise will be offered another once in a lifetime role!




Year 5 have been journalists! For our Newspaper Day, the children researched different news stories and decided which to include in their own newspaper. They then took notes, thinking carefully about the key information and what the readers would want to know. Next, the children used their knowledge of newspaper articles from our English lessons to write two articles. These included catchy headlines, by-lines, a lead paragraph or standfirst (which included the 5 Ws to hook the readers), a main body giving the key events and reported speech and finally a tail, which included a question for the lucky readers to think further about the subject. We had a fantastic day and the children looked very smart in their professional clothes!

RECEPTION VISIT TRANSPORT MUSEUM

As part of Reception's topic work on transport this half term, they visited the famous London Transport Museum in Covent Garden. The children were excited to see the exhibitions of a wide range of transport from past and present. The museum's collection included a wide range of vehicles, from the very first horse-drawn carriages to the famous red double-decker buses, as well as modern electric trains. It showcased how these vehicles have evolved and changed over time, helping shape London City into what it is today. The children were able to explore an assimulator, which allowed them to experienced how it felt being a tube driver. In addition, some of them took behind the wheel of a double decker bus and became a Bus driver, they were so excited using the big steering wheel and hooting the horn on the bus. The children had a fun filled day, thank you to all the parent volunteers on the day.



YEAR 1 VISIT CUTTY SARK



Year 1 had a fun visit to the Cutty Sark for the Sea Adventures workshop in February. They explored the ship, learning about its journeys around the world. The children saw the deck and inside of the ship and took part in activities like knot-tying. They also listened to stories about sailors and their adventures at sea. It was a great way for the children to learn about life on the ship and the exciting world of sea travel!

YEAR 3 VISIT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM



This half-term, Year 3 embarked on an exciting trip to the Science Museum, as part of their unit on Forces and Magnets. The visit provided a fantastic opportunity for the children to deepen their understanding of scientific concepts through hands-on exploration and interactive learning. One of the highlights of the day was the time spent in the Wonderlab, where the children became scientists, investigating a range of fascinating experiments. This included testing the effects of friction using a giant slide. Each section of the slide was made from different materials and children could test and judge which materials created the most or least friction by how fast the object travelled. The interactive activities allowed the children to experience science in action and brought their learning to life. It was an exciting and fascinating day.

YEAR 4 VISIT SONAES CENTRE



Year 4 had the exciting opportunity to visit Sir John Soane's Museum as part of their learning about the Ancient Greeks. As they explored the museum, the children gained an understanding of the life and legacy of Sir John Soane and his family. They examined intricate Greek pottery, admired stained glass, and discovered fascinating myths about Greek gods and goddesses. The highlight

of the visit was a hands-on workshop where the children labeled the parts of the Parthenon, including the pediment, the capital, and other architectural features. The day really helped to bring the children's learning to life.

YEAR 2 VISIT HORNIMAN MUSEUM



Year 2 visited the Horniman Museum to consolidate their Geography learning on the topic 'Life in Africa.' They explored The World gallery, looking at musical instruments, masks and other artefacts belonging to Kenya, Nigeria and other countries in Africa. This tied in with their learning at school about life on the continent. The children went to the touch tables too and had the chance to touch a real turtle shell and a fish skeleton! Finally they took part in a fantastic, interactive

workshop, where they explored some traditional African clothes and toys children might play with. The children shared excellent ideas throughout the day, as they drew comparisons between life in Africa and the UK. We had a great day!

YEAR 4 VISIT THE LONDON BUDDHIST CENTRE

This half term year 4 attended the London Buddhist Centre to further enhance their RE learning about Buddhism. The children have been learning about what life of the Buddha was like and how Buddhist people maintain peace at the center of their lives. Year 4 have also been linking their learning from RE to their assembly, on the festival of Nirvana. This festival celebrates the enlightenment of Siddhartha and his journey into Buddhism. At the Buddhist Centre, the children were offered information about Buddhism, Siddhartha and his journey in exploring life beyond his palace walls. In addition, the children also learned about what special things are done to remember the religion, one key element being meditation. They then practiced some meditating, starting with some movement meditation to feel their bodies, breathing meditation to feel their souls and lastly, some mindful meditation to calm their minds. The children really enjoyed this activity as they said it made them feel calm and peaceful.



YEAR 6 VISIT CENTRE OF CELLS

Year 6 had an exciting trip to the Centre of the Cell, at the Blizard Institute in Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry. The children saw real scientists working, giving them a chance to learn about medical research. The STEM Pod Experience was a fun, hands-on science adventure where they explored topics like cells, the human body, and medical research through films, games, and activities. It was an enjoyable and educational visit that got the children excited about science.



YEAR 6 VISIT LONDON MET UNIVERSITY

Year 6 had a great visit to London Metropolitan University for a Taster Day, where they took part in a range of activities designed to introduce them to university life. The day gave them the chance to explore what university is like, while learning valuable skills that will help them in both secondary school and beyond. The students had the opportunity to try different activities, ask questions, and get a sense of what their future studies might look like, all while gaining confidence and new skills. Furthermore, the children delivered presentations to share the courses they would like to study at university, where they can study them and the entry requirements needed. It was a very informative day and will hopefully deliver high aspirations, as the children begin to think about their goals in later life.



YEAR 5 & 6 CHILDRENS UNIVERSITY

Year 5 and 6 had a visit from Stella Wilson from Children's University last half term. She introduced them to Westminster Children's University a program, in partnership with the University of Westminster, which offers a variety of workshops and experiences designed to enrich learning and inspire children to follow their dreams. She also explained how they can graduate by collecting points for completing extracurricular activities. Through this initiative, children have the chance to gain real-life experiences and be recognized for their achievements outside the classroom. If you are the parent of a child in year 5 or 6, please send in details of the fantastic learning experiences you are providing outside of school. These can then be uploaded to your child's portfolio. Mr Heighington will be on hand to help should you have any questions or require support.