



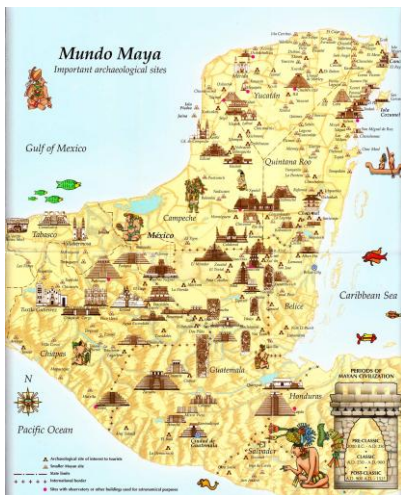
Kirklevington Primary School Elm News - September 2026

Hello, everyone! I am delighted to welcome Elm Class back for 2026/27 academic year. I hope you have all had a wonderful summer and that everyone is looking forward to the exciting period of learning ahead of us.

Our topic for the Autumn Term:
'Hola Mexico!' & 'Ancient Maya'

Our main topic this term will transport us across the Atlantic to explore the fascinating Ancient Maya civilisation and modern-day Mexico.

We will begin our History learning by discovering where and when the Maya lived and placing their civilisation in chronological and geographical context. The children will investigate what made the Maya such a successful society, including how they used the natural resources available to them to build, farm and solve problems. We will also explore how historians know so much about the Maya by examining evidence left behind, including fascinating artefacts and wall art. As our historical investigation develops, we will discover how Maya society was organised and ruled, considering who held power and the different levels within its social hierarchy. We will then draw upon previous learning about the Ancient Greeks, comparing the hierarchy and systems of rule within these two remarkable ancient civilisations.



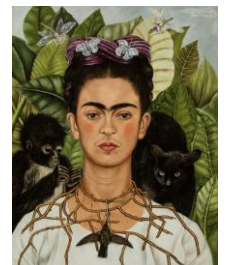
Our Geography learning will take us to modern-day Mexico. We will locate Mexico on a world map and investigate its position in relation to the Equator and hemispheres, as well as identifying its surrounding countries, seas, major cities and mountain ranges.

Using coordinates, the children will locate important ancient Maya sites across Mexico and Central America, including Uxmal, Chichén Itzá, Tulum, Tikal and Copán. We will explore the dramatic landscape of the Chihuahuan Desert and compare daily life in Mexico with life in the UK, including food and school life. The children will even put their geographical skills to practical use by planning their own journey to Mexico, considering flights, accommodation, food and currency, before creating a tourist leaflet to persuade others to visit!

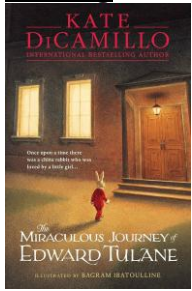
Mexico will inspire lots of our creative learning too. We will explore the colourful traditions and artwork associated with Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and discover the work of celebrated Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. We will also investigate the fascinating origins of chocolate and discover foods enjoyed by the ancient Maya, many of which remain familiar today.



There will be opportunities to taste and make Mexican-inspired foods and drinks, including tortillas, guacamole, salsa and fruit drinks, as well as experimenting with drinking chocolate by adding ingredients such as orange and chilli. It promises to be a busy - and hopefully delicious - journey through the history, geography, art and culture of Mexico!



Reading



Our first piece of shared literature will be 'The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane' by Kate DiCamillo. We will read the book together as a class throughout the term, exploring its powerful themes of love, loss, friendship and change. We will follow Edward's remarkable journey and investigate how his character develops as his experiences and relationships transform his outlook on the world. We will also explore the author's use of vivid description, emotion and setting to bring Edward's extraordinary journey to life.

Maths

Our Maths lessons this term will begin with a focus on place value. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils will follow their own maths curriculum, ensuring that learning provides the right level of challenge and builds upon their existing knowledge. Both year groups will develop a secure understanding of place value before progressing to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, where they will learn and apply the written methods appropriate to their stage of learning. Throughout the term, children will continue to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills, applying their mathematical knowledge confidently in a range of contexts. This will be studied in detail and returned to frequently throughout the year in both lessons and daily Fluent in Five practice.

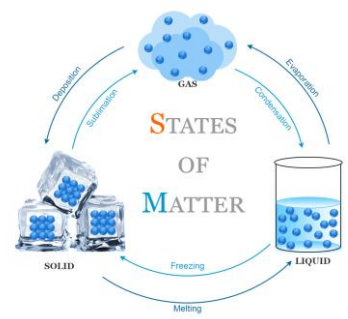
A large focus for our Y4 pupils this year is to develop confidence, speed and precision in the recall of times table facts, particularly as this is the essential foundation for large quantities of mathematics lessons in upper KS2. Year 4 children will complete the 'Multiplication Tables Check' in June 2026.

English

Within this term's English sessions, we will solidify our understanding of the core grammar knowledge essential to Key Stage 2 - beginning with noun types, verb types and the links between subject, verbs and objects in a sentence. Children will develop their use of paragraphs, conjunctions, fronted adverbials and increasingly varied sentence structures, with Year 5 pupils progressing to more advanced features such as relative clauses, modal verbs and parenthesis. Throughout the term, children will continue to develop the knowledge and skills to effectively plan, draft, edit and improve their writing. Writing compositions this half-term will include descriptions of our own dragons, explanations of how chocolate is made and non-chronological reports.

Science

During the first half-term, our Science learning will focus on States of Matter. Children will explore the properties of solids, liquids and gases, investigating how their particles behave and how substances can change from one state to another. Through practical investigations, we will explore melting, freezing and boiling points, before discovering how evaporation and condensation occur and applying this knowledge to understand the water cycle.



After half-term, our focus will shift to Electricity. Children will explore electrical appliances and safety before learning about the different components needed to construct a series circuit, including cells, batteries, wires, bulbs, buzzers and switches. We will investigate complete and incomplete circuits, discover how switches can control the flow of electricity and test different materials to identify electrical conductors and insulators. Throughout the unit, children will apply their knowledge through practical investigations, constructing, testing and problem-solving with their own electrical circuits.

PE

In the first half-term, PE will be taught each **Wednesday** afternoon, with lessons focusing on tennis and developing the children's racket skills, coordination and understanding of the game. After half-term, PE will move to **Thursday** afternoon (due to the shared curriculum time with expert coaches from DF Coaching), when our focus will change to netball, developing skills such as passing, movement, teamwork and applying these within games.

Please ensure that your child wears a PE kit to school on the appropriate day.

Lessons will be outdoor (weather-permitting) so children will need to wear a **hoodie, t-shirt, jogging bottoms or shorts and trainers**. Please see the link below (also found on our website) for more details:

<https://kirklevington.org.uk/parents/uniform/>

No jewellery is to be worn for PE. Children wearing earrings will be asked to remove / cover these prior the beginning of the lesson. Children with long hair must tie hair in a bobble before to PE lessons. **All pupils should have a water bottle in school every day**. As well as this, we will be participating in the Daily Mile, so your child is welcome to keep some trainers in school (in a bag on their cloakroom peg).

Forest School

Elm class will participate in Forest School sessions each Tuesday afternoon in the first half-term (up until we break up in October). Please ensure your child arrives in their PE kit and brings wellies on this day. Wellies can remain in a plastic bag on pegs in our cloakroom. As we move towards the colder months, we would also like for children to have a warm coat, a hat and gloves in school for these sessions. Our next block of Forest School will be in the first half-term of 2027.

Swimming

Children in Y4 and will attend a 2-week block of swimming in December. Y5 children who are still to achieve their 25m certificate, plus any other children we feel would benefit from the swimming sessions, will also attend.

The National Curriculum states that by the time pupils leave Key Stage 2, they should be able to:

1. Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over at least 25 metres
2. Use a range of strokes effectively — for example:
 - Front crawl
 - Backstroke
 - Breaststroke
3. Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations

More information will be communicated regarding this closer to the time.

Reading Records

All pupils in Elm must bring their reading book and reading record to school **every day**. Please ensure that reading records are signed by an adult weekly. Children are encouraged to read at home as much as possible (every night would be great!). This will enable them to build and consolidate important reading skills, such as reading speed and fluency, the ability to analyse texts and make inferences. We will aim to promote children's enjoyment of reading throughout the year and develop their fluency to ensure appropriate advancement through the reading colour stages.

Homework – Multiplication and problem-solving focus

As well as regular reading, children should be practising their times tables often. Quick recall is essential to the new maths topics taught in Key Stage 2. I will set times table challenge homework through Seesaw weekly. Activities will focus on a mixed range of multiplication table facts and dive into problem solving and reasoning.

Learn With Emile is a fantastic app for Y4 children to practise the Multiplication Check as it provides a practice experience that closely mirrors the format and timings of the real assessment. Times Table Rockstars is also an excellent tool for practising multiplication and division recall. Your child may have their specific times table focus set on there too. Please see the login details in your child's reading record.

Spelling

Spellings will be assigned on a Friday through Spelling Shed and tested the following Friday. Each week, your child will complete three spelling lessons to become familiar with the rule. Spelling Shed login details are also in your child's reading record. This website can also be accessed at home to practise the spellings.

If you have any problems or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me. I am thoroughly looking forward to this academic year and hope the children are too!

Mr Drake 😊