

Thursday 13th. February 2025

Dear Parents,

Bonjour !

Spring Half Term Newsletter

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:

This half term the children all the classes have been involved in a variety of enrichment activities.

Reception: What another busy half term it's been for Reception!

The topic for this half term has been 'Superheroes'. The children started the topic by looking at some of the traditional 'comic book' superheroes. They also loved reading the story of Supertato (by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet) and used this story as a stimulus for making their own fruit and vegetable superheroes afterwards!

More recently, the class have been learning about 'real-life' superheroes and particularly enjoyed visits from real-life superheroes from within our Buckstones' family, including a midwife, nurses, a police officer and scientists.



As well as learning about superheroes, the children have also learned about the festival of the Chinese/lunar New Year. They fully embraced this topic by making their own dancing dragons, designing beautiful Chinese fans and their favourite part... tasting some delicious Chinese foods!



The children are progressing really well with their phonics skills. They are now well on with learning the level 3 phonemes and are blending and segmenting simple words brilliantly. They have also been practising the correct letter formation to go with each of the phonemes and are perfecting the correct formation of the letters in their own names every morning when they arrive in school.

In Maths, the children have been practising counting accurately to twenty, particularly focussing on the tricky 'teen' numbers. Recently, the children have also been learning the names and properties of 3D shapes and also enjoyed our recent topic on using balance scales to find things that were 'heavy' and 'light'.

The recent cold weather has provided the children with the perfect conditions for some Wintery forest fun sessions. The children have loved having these 'hands-on' sessions where they have been able to explore the seasonal changes in a much more meaningful way.



To finish the Superheroes topic, the children finished with a special superhero-themed day, where they enjoyed coming to school in fancy dress and spending the day doing all things 'superhero'...

What a SUPER way to finish a SUPER half term Reception! 😊

Year 1: Year 1 have had another busy half term!

In their other **English** lessons, they continue to work on their SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar) skills, focusing in particular on using capital letters, full stops and an introduction to exclamation marks. They have also been learning how to write both lower case and capital letters properly.

Since Christmas, they have been learning about the features of traditional tales. They have looked in particular at The Three Little Pigs and have had fun using voices for different characters then retelling the story!



They have also been learning how to write letters for different purposes. They wrote letters to Gallery Oldham to thank them for a lovely trip have also written some wonderful apology letters from the wolf to the 3 little pigs to say sorry for blowing their houses down!

The children have been enjoying their 'Great Fire of London' **history** topic. They have been keen to find out what happened back in 1666 and have enjoyed creating pictures on the iPads, recreating and describing what Samuel Pepys might have seen from his window. It was lovely to see so many of you at their recent topic afternoon, learning all about the man himself - Samuel Pepys!



They are looking forward to their trip to Fireground in Rochdale after the half-term break. It's a lovely trip which not only helps to reinforce their learning about the events of 1666, it also teaches them about the importance of fire safety too. Following on from the trip, the children will be writing their own eyewitness accounts from 1666, written as though they are the children of Samuel Pepys.



In **maths** they have been continuing to develop their calculation skills; they have also been working hard on recognising and comparing numbers within 50 and 100, as well as learning by heart their

numbers bonds to 10. They continue to learn new maths songs to help them with their counting skills and recall of key number facts.

Their problem-solving and reasoning skills are improving all the time and they continue to do well with their counting in 2s and 10s. The children have also enjoyed their recent practical maths sessions, involving position and direction linked to algorithms.



Their latest **Science** topic for this term is 'Materials'. The children have enjoyed exploring the properties of a range of different materials and have been grouping objects by which material they are made from. In particular, they have been focussing on the materials wood, metal, plastic, glass and fabric and had great fun completing a search of the school for these materials.

They even conducted an experiment to see what material was the best for keeping Ted dry in the rain. That was good fun!



In **art** the children have been developing their printing skills and have impressed us with their imagination and ideas! They have developed lots of different printing skills - handprints, wax rubbings, lino printing, sponge printing etc, as well as creating their own repeating patterns on Purple Mash.

Last month, they had the most wonderful morning at Gallery Oldham, taking part in a Pattern and Print workshop. They had great fun exploring the galleries, investigating patterns and then making their own printed masterpieces. They had such a lovely time!

galleryoldham

Many thanks again to those of you who work with your child on their **homework** tasks - supporting your child by reading with him / her at home, but also practising spellings, playing number games and completing general homework tasks. The additional input is much appreciated and we are really starting to see a difference with those children who have the regular extra input at home ☺.

After a very hectic half-term the children are now looking forward to our half-term break!

Year 2: We started this term with a visit from Mr Plater, the curator of the Hull Dinosaur Museum who brought with him some amazing artefacts, including the skull of an Allosaurus, a Tyrannosaurus Rex's tooth, claws, bones and lots of fossils.



'Dinosaur Day' really inspired our writing and Year 2 produced a set of fantastic dinosaur reports. The children carried out their own research, wrote and published their own dinosaur fact file. Year 2 have also enjoyed sharing lots of descriptive dinosaur poems and they wrote what they liked about their favourite poem. This week, children are writing their own dinosaur poem incorporating the four sentence types; questions, statements, exclamations and commands. We are very much looking forward to performing their poems too, considering the impact of their tone of voice and how to include actions to bring their performance to life.

In Maths children have been continuing to develop their understanding of the place value of numbers, they have been adding and subtracting two 2-digit numbers and aiming to master number bonds to twenty and beyond to one hundred. The children have enjoyed identifying properties of 3D shapes using the correct vocabulary i.e the number of faces, edges vertices (pointy corners) a shape has. They are also developing their problem-solving skills and they are beginning to tell the time to quarter past and quarter to the hour.

In Geography, the children have been learning about the Scottish Island of Coll. This is the island the author Mairi Hedderwick based her Katie Morag stories on. The children have enjoyed locating the Isle of Coll on a map, looking at the human and physical features of Coll and learning how life on the Isle of Coll is different to their own in Shaw.



In RE the children have been learning about inspirational leaders and reading in detail about the life of Mother Teresa. The children have been identifying the positive qualities of other 'inspiring leaders' and are going to be writing an acrostic poem describing their own positive qualities.

In computing the children have been using Purple Mash to sort and present data. They built a pictogram that represented the types of houses Year 2 live in. They are beginning to understand how using yes or no questions can help to sort data. Children used '2Question' to create their own binary tree to sort digital avatars.

Our Art topic this term has been 'weaving'. The children have been weaving using different materials and they used felt to create a beautiful class tapestry that is displayed on the Year 2 door.

Well done for another super half term Year 2, have a lovely week off!

Year 3: Year 3's Geography topic this half term has been The Countries of the United Kingdom. The children have been developing their map reading skills, using atlases to name and locate towns, cities, counties, rivers, mountains and islands around the UK. They have used an eight-point compass to describe the direction of travel between cities and they have considered the changing effects of immigration to this country throughout its history.



In Maths, this half term, Year 3 have been developing their understanding of place value. The children have learnt how to add and subtract 2-digit and 3-digit numbers by partitioning and using

number lines. They have learnt how to use known number facts from their times tables, including the 8 times table, to multiply and divide. They have started to place fractions on a number line, recognise equivalent fractions and calculate fractions of numbers. They have been learning how to recognise angles that are greater than, less than or equal to a right angle. They have described the properties of 2D shapes and have learnt how to calculate the perimeter of simple shapes. The children have demonstrated the ability to work co-operatively to solve problems and to explain their reasoning both orally and in writing. Well done, Year 3!

In English, the children have worked extremely hard to read and analyse a range of playscripts, before planning and writing their own playscript based on a nursery rhyme of their choice. The children enjoyed acting out some of these in front of the whole school in Friday assembly. The children have also written some excellent poems based on the months of the year. They collected lots of ideas about each month, then wrote their own poem, following the structure of poems we had read. These will be presented in a class book that will be kept in the class bookcase for all to read.

In Science, Year 3 have been learning about the different parts of plants and their functions and they have carried out a series of investigations to find out the conditions required for plant growth.



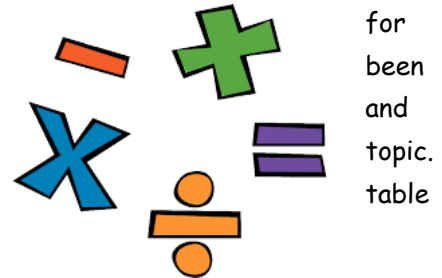
In Computing, the children have developed their presentation skills using a desktop publishing application. They have combined text and images, considering effective layouts, to produce a leaflet entitled Digital Kindness based on their PSHE work on 'Staying Safe - Digital Wellbeing.' These will be displayed in the Computer Suite.

The RE unit of work this half term is 'What do Muslims and Christians believe about worshipping God?' The children have been learning the core beliefs about each religion, considering similarities and differences, and relating these to their own ideas. They have had some thoughtful discussions, and produced imaginative and caring written work and drawings. Well done!

In DT lessons, the children have investigated Structures and how they are strengthened. They have focused their work on Gift Boxes, collecting ideas from real life and from the Internet. They experimented with different 3D shapes and strengthening/protecting materials before designing and making their own eye-catching gift boxes.

Year 4: Happy New Year everyone! Year 4 have made a brilliant start to 2024 - well done!

In Maths, we have been continuing to work on written methods addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. We have also deepening our understanding of fractions, shapes and angles, have drawn our own bar and line graphs linked to our geography. In addition, we have been focusing on our rapid recall of times facts and have introduced the 7 times tables into our repertoire.



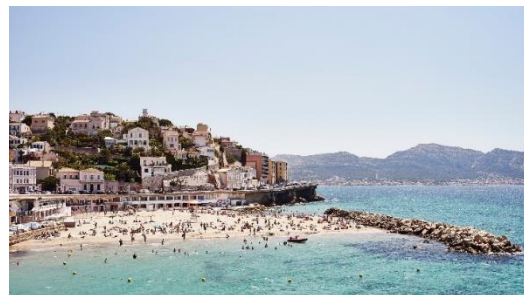
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In English, we have been using the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe as inspiration to write setting descriptions. We have read about and explore the world of Narnia in depth, then created our own imaginary lands that could be lying 'through the wardrobe.' We have also been studying playscripts, using 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: The Play' as our hook. We then wrote our own playscripts based on George's Marvellous Medicine. Many of us have found a theatrical side we didn't know we had!



This half term we have introduced our new Science topic, States of Matter. So far, we have identified the material and particle properties of solids, liquids and gases, completed a very tasty experiment to discover how temperature affects states of matter, and have even had a go at becoming each state in a class demonstration! We will be continuing the topic next half term by looking more in depth at the Water Cycle.

In geography, we have been on a journey to the South of France, finding out all about Marseilles. The children have explored tourism in the area and created amazing tourist leaflets detailing what there is to do in Marseilles. We have also been comparing the land use and climate in Marseilles and Manchester.



In art, we have been finishing our Lowry inspired drawings. We have drawn industrial backgrounds, using ideas of perspective to create fantastic images, then populated our 'Salford street' scene with our own matchstick people based on ourselves!

In outdoor PE, we have been learning how to play netball and developing our passing, defending and attacking skills. Although it has been very cold, the children have worked really hard and really impressed us with their team work and skills building. In indoor P.E, the pupils have been testing their fitness, focusing on developing their speed, strength, stamina, balance, agility and coordination through a range of different exercises.

Year 5: In PE, Year 5 have developed their tennis skills during our outdoor sessions. We have learnt how to use forehand, backhand and volley shots with a greater level of accuracy. We finished the half-term with some tennis matches to show our skills. During our indoor sessions, we have continued to develop our gymnastic skills.

In Science, we been studying Earth and Space. We have learnt lots of interesting facts about our solar system, particularly the Earth, Sun and Moon, and have focused on how these interacted with each other. We finished our topic by creating an end of half-term space board game which included a range of questions covering all the knowledge we gathered during our learning.



In PSHE, we have focused on identifying and assessing risks. We have looked where risks might occur in our day-to-day lives and what actions we could take to minimise them.

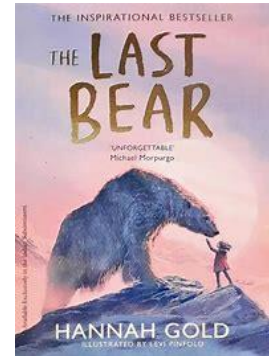


In History, we have learnt about an Early Islamic Civilisation: Baghdad. They have enjoyed finding out about how the location of Baghdad helped it to develop into the Round City and why it was so successful in the Golden Age.

In French, we have learnt the names of different animals we might have as pets and how to say we do or do not have them.

In RE, we have compared the differences in how Christians and Muslims pray. We thought about why people pray and learnt some facts about both religions.

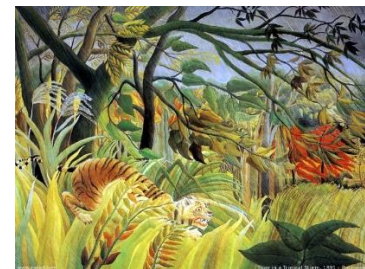
We have started reading our class text 'The Last Bear' and have completed a diary entry in English from the perspective of one of the main characters. We developed our use of indirect speech, character and setting description, and how to display emotions in our writing.



Year 6: Year 6 children have been learning about rainforests. They have located the tropical rainforests of the world, focusing on the Amazon rainforest. They have found out about the different layers of the rainforest and the animals found in each layer. They have also looked at the causes of deforestation and the damage caused as a result.



Art is linked to the rainforests as they have looked at the work of Henri Rousseau and are currently in the process of creating a collage of a jungle scene.



In Science, the children have been looking at classification of plants and animals. They have used decision tree diagrams to identify these and created their own to classify and name different types of leaves. They have also found out information about Carl Linnaeus - the father of classification.

In R.E., the children have discussed who has inspired them and the qualities of inspirational people.

Year 6 children have begun their coding topic which involves programming using more complex variables to manipulate inputs and create useful outputs.

TOPIC AFTERNOON: We are pleased to invite you to our topic afternoon on Friday 14th. February. This is a chance for you to see the topic work the children are doing in class and join in with the activities. Due to space only 1 parent per child please. The afternoon will start at 2.30pm.

GOVERNORS: On Wednesday 29th. January the Governing Body met. During this meeting the Governors:

- Received a head teacher's report outlining what we have been doing in school
- Reviewed the School Development Plan
- Reviewed our safeguarding procedures and training
- Reported on the fire drill and lockdown drill

FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES

The money raised so far this year has been used to pay for the Panto tickets, the Willow Dome, new guillotines, P.E. equipment and they are going to pay for the markings on the playground to be repainted.

I am sure the children will all enjoy the discos this week. **A big thank you** to all the volunteers who have arranged them and help out on the evenings.

PARENTS EVENINGS

Parents Evenings this year are on Tuesday 4th. March and Thursday 6th. March. Please make an appointment via parentmail.

BEING RESPECTFUL

The majority of our parents are polite and respectful, so it saddens me I am having to include this message in the Newsletter. However, after a few incidents I feel it is necessary to ask and remind all parents that it is not okay to raise your voice, shout or gesture at any member of staff. All school staff are respectful to children and families at all times. This is a reminder that this must work both ways. When you speak to any member of school staff please be respectful. Thank you.

SATS

Thank you to all the parents who attended the SATs meeting this half term. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the changes to the SATS and how to support the children in Year 6 so they are fully prepared for the tests in the summer.

School reopens on Monday 24th. February.

Thank you for your continued support,

S.E.Healey