

Friday 15<sup>th</sup>. December 2017

Dear Parents,

Bonjour ! Joyeux Noël



### Christmas Newsletter

#### **CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:**

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

**Reception:** The children in Reception have enjoyed learning about traditional tales. They have been using puppets and masks to act out the stories.

The children have been especially busy in the mark making area, writing letters and lists to Father



Christmas, writing cards to friends and family.

The role play area has been changed into an elves toy shop, the children have worked very well together co-operating and communicating with each other and pretending to be Santa's little helpers!

The children have worked extremely hard for their Nativity play, and they are very excited to be participating in all the Christmas activities.

**Year 1:** Year 1 have had another very busy half term! In English they have been learning to order the alphabet using both capital and lower-case letters and have also been learning to use the correct names of each of the letters. Writing-wise they have produced some lovely poetry - a Bonfire Night senses poem, as well as an A to Z of Christmas poem.

As well as their number and calculation work in Maths, the children have also been using their reasoning and investigation skills to help them to solve a variety of maths problems. They have really impressed us with their thinking skills!

The children have now started to learn their 'Learn Its' number facts and are impressing us with their quick-fire mental maths skills. As the children progress we will be sending some of these facts

home (e.g. doubles, number bonds to 10) for them to practise further - please look out for these coming home in the Spring term.

In Science they have been learning all about different animals and sorting them into groups ... they have done very well learning some really tricky words such as carnivore, herbivore and omnivore!

In Geography, they finally managed to get out into the local area and have done some lovely sketches of some of the houses on Delamere Avenue. They have also worked hard on this half-term's geography-related homework tasks (house pictures as well as maps showing their routes to school) - many thanks for your support with this.



In Art, the children continue to show off their creative skills and have produced some amazing artwork on the iPads and computers. Their *Gruffalo* pictures done on the computer were out of this world!

Finally, we would like to say a big well done to all those children who have been reading regularly at home, completing their homework tasks and learning their weekly spellings - great job, keep it up!

The children really have worked their socks off this half-term and have taken great pride in their work when making their Christmas cards and calendars - we are sure that you will love them when the children bring them home. We are all now looking forward to Christmas and a well-deserved rest!

**Year 2:** We have had a hardworking and enjoyable half-term!

As part of their topic on 'Famous Events' they visited the war memorial in Shaw in order to understand more about Remembrance Day. The children behaved beautifully despite the terrible weather and showed great respect to the fallen soldiers. They did some amazing sketches of the war memorial, the poppy crosses and the poppy wreaths, then planted their own paper poppies to say thank you to the soldiers. Thank you to the parents who have sent in medals and photographs of beloved members of their family. They have enjoyed sharing your special memories. The children have enjoyed listening to war time songs including 'It's a long way to Tipperary' and 'Pack up your



troubles in your old kit bag.'

Also during their topic on 'Famous Events,' the children were fascinated by our study of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. They amazed us with the amount of facts that they could remember and some of the children had very strong opinions on the actions of both King James I and Guy Fawkes!

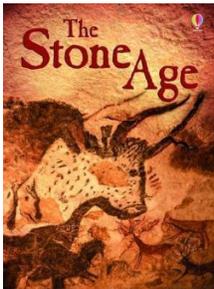
In Maths, the children have been learning about time. They have been practising telling the time to the quarter hour and trying to understand durations of time from seconds and minutes to months and years. They have just started a unit of work on position and direction, in which they will be looking at left, right, half turns, quarter turns, clockwise and anti-clockwise.

In English they have been looking at writing letters. Their work has been based on a book called 'Dear Teacher' by Amy Husband in which a little boy writes to his teacher explaining why he will be late for school. The children had great fun writing letters with their own wonderful and funny reasons why they could not come to school!!! Again this half term, the children have been working hard to practise their weekly spellings and we are hoping for some excellent results in our next 'Grand Spelling Test.'

Again they have had so much fun at Health and Fitness Club this half term and fortunately they have been able to have a lot of our sessions outside. The children have been busy practising their skills of throwing and catching, hula-hooping and skipping. Some of the children have enjoyed creating their own obstacle courses. The behaviour and enthusiasm of the children has been amazing as always. Can I take this opportunity to remind you that the club will finish for Year 2 at Christmas, but they are welcome to join me again in the summer term. Letters will be sent out nearer the time.

Well done to all of Year 2 for learning their lines for the Nativity. We are so proud of you.

**Year 3:** Their History Topic this half term has been Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. The children have worked extremely hard to develop their investigative skills, using artefacts to make deductions about life in the past. Following a considerable amount of independent research, they have used their computer skills to produce some very interesting and eye-catching information leaflets about life in the Stone Age. In our Art work, the children have used chalks to create their own cave drawings, and they are making calendars based on a Celtic theme.



Their trip to Tatton Park on 22nd November gave the children a chance to see and use the tools and equipment that prehistoric Britons would have used in their everyday life, and to learn how to track deer. The children took part enthusiastically in all the activities and their behaviour was excellent. Well done, Year 3!

The Linking Project has continued this term with the children from Buckstones writing the first letter to their pen-friend at Whitegate End Primary School. These have now been delivered and the children are waiting excitedly for the replies.

Their work in English has been centred on using dialogue. The children have learned the conventions of speech punctuation, writing their own entertaining versions of Beware of Boys by Tony Blundell. In addition, the children have read, performed and written play scripts based on a range of nursery rhymes.

The RE theme of Diwali lent itself to further work on drama and play scripts, linked to the story of Rama and Sita, which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

Maths work has involved multiplication and division, leading to practical activities and investigations related to fractions. I have been very impressed with the children's hard work and their ability to explain and demonstrate their mathematical thinking.

The children are making excellent progress in Swimming, and many certificates have already been awarded. Well done, Year 3!

**Year 4:** At the very beginning of this half term, Year 4 went on a very exciting trip to Quarry Bank Mill in Cheshire. They learnt about what it would have been like to live and work at the mill as a child in the early Victorian period. They got to have a go at some of the jobs children would do, such as carrying cans of cotton and they watched adults demonstrate the more dangerous jobs. They saw where the children would have slept and what medicines they would have been given when they were sick, including the highly poisonous tea that was prescribed for stomach aches. The children agreed that it is much better to be a child in 2017!



The visit to Quarry Bank was part of Year 4's topic on the Victorians. They have learnt about life in a workhouse, what other jobs children would have done, what schools were like and why Manchester has so many old cotton mills.

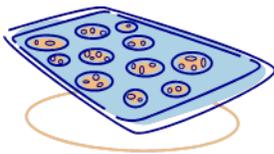
In English, the children have been reading stories with historical settings and have had a go at writing their own based on two stories set in the Victorian times called Fair's Fair and The Sea monsters.

In Maths, Year 4 have been practising their problem solving skills, including working with money. They have also been learning how to calculate the perimeter and area of shapes such as oblongs and squares as well as the properties of different types of triangles and quadrilaterals.

Their PE lessons this half term have focussed on Bollywood dancing and Basketball. The children did really well coming up with ideas for the dance and they have become quite skilled at basketball too!

**Year 5:** Year 5 have been very busy this half term creating biscuit companies. They had a series of group discussions and had to make lots of decisions in order to design their biscuits and biscuit company. Each company created a different shape of biscuit and they were given a choice of toppings to create a design. They had to estimate how much profit they would make based on the quantity they had made successfully and their biscuit price. The children worked cooperatively and enthusiastically in their biscuit company groups during our tea, coffee and biscuit afternoon. They were very grown up and used excellent manners when they sold their biscuits to Year 5 parents and grandparents. Every member of the group had an important role to play and without doing so the afternoon would not have been possible. A special thank you goes out to the band for providing entertainment to the Year 5 guests at this busy time of year and our kitchen staff for helping to bake all of the biscuits. All of the children had a great time and all of their hard work paid off.

Thank you to all who came and showed their support. The children have decided to donate some of their profits to the following charities: Blue Cross for Pets, Make a Wish Foundation UK, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Alzheimer's and Dementia Society and Cancer Research. With the remaining profits, they will be buying some new stationary for the classroom and have a few other exciting ideas that they are yet to choose from- all educational! We will keep you updated.



In English, they have been comparing all sorts of creation stories such as Pandora's Box, Pang Gu and the Christian Creation story. They have been comparing them to find similarities and differences. They have learnt about different myths and legends in order gather ideas to create their own story.

In Science, Year 5 have been testing air resistance by making parachutes and gyrocopters. The children found that a greater surface area slows down the parachutes and gyrocopters. The children had fun investigating forces.

Year 5 have also been very busy making Christmas cards and calendars for 2018. We hope you like them!

**Year 6:** Year 6 children have learned to identify some of the features of Christian buildings. They have all researched a larger cathedral or abbey and are writing a report based on their research.

We have started our topic on maps and map reading. The children are learning about latitude/longitude, key lines e.g., Equator, Prime Meridian and how to locate features on a map using 4 & 6-figure co-ordinates.

In Science the children have investigated a how different circuits work. They have constructed circuits from rectilinear diagrams, drawn rectilinear diagrams and have been able to trouble-shoot

potential problems explaining why some circuits may not work. They have also constructed a car and are currently adding an electrical motor to make it move (fingers crossed).

Our Christmas art projects have included making Christmas cards on the theme of "O Little Town



of Bethlehem" and calendars in the style of Bridget Riley.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

**Football:** Well done to our football team who are continuing to do well playing against other schools from Royton and Shaw.

**Dance:** Mrs Kulczycki and her Junior Dance Group have had lots of fun during their energetic dance sessions on a Friday evening. They performed for their parents on Friday and a small group performed at St. Saviour's in Saturday.

**Band:** The Band have also been very busy at the Christmas Fair, the Christmas Fair at St. Paul's, St Saviour's Christmas Tree Festival, we also played at the Medequip charity event at Manchester Cathedral and for the residents of Shaw Side and Laburnum House. Wherever the band and Mr Meaden play the audience are shocked that children so young can play at such a high standard. Well done boys and girls!



**Choir:** Mrs Pearson has been practising with our choir on a Thursday evening and they performed at St. Saviour's Christmas Tree Festival.

**Gymnastics and Football:** Sports Development runs a gymnastics club for the Juniors on a Monday night and Mr Nield and Mr John Platt runs football training for the Junior children on a Tuesday and Wednesday night.

**Health and Fitness:** The children who have attended the Health and Fitness Club on Tuesdays with Mrs Joyce have had a wonderful time getting active and learning new skills. Unfortunately they have had their last session and we will be welcoming Year 1 next term to take part. Year 2 will however, get another chance in the summer and hopefully we will see just as many children join in, if not more!

**French:** Year 1 have had a great time learning French songs and words with Miss Platt. They enjoyed a French feast last week.

## **SPONSORED EVENT- SPORTS FOR CHAMPIONS UK**

This year we have decided to participate in a sponsored sports event. British Champion triple jumper, Naomi Ogbeta, will be running the event on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January. All children will need to have their indoor P.E. kits in school on that day. We kindly ask family and friends to sponsor their children for participating in a Primary Schools' Circuit Challenge. They will be completing: Spotty Dogs, Leg Drives, Full/Half Press-ups and Star Jump exercises. They will be completing as many repetitions as they can in 1 minute.

The celebrity GB athlete will be supporting and motivating the children throughout. Sponsorship money raised will be split - 60% for school funds and 40% to Sports for Champion Charity. The charity supports British athletes with their training.

All children took home a sponsorship form on Friday and the sponsorship money will be collected after Christmas, no later than the 8<sup>th</sup>. January.

Rewards:

All participants will receive a sticker.

If they raise £5-£14.99 they will receive a postcard of the GB athlete

If they raise £15 -£34.99 they will receive a signed poster of the GB athlete

If they raise more than £35 they will receive a signed photo of the athlete and themselves.

Also class rewards for the class which raise the most money.

**GOVERNORS:** During the full Governors' meeting the Governors received a report from the head teacher detailing the results from last year's tests, a report on attendance and the school development plan. Also during the meeting the Chair, Steve Beckley, and Vice Chair, Pauline Whitehead, were re-elected. The Governors also reviewed the reports on the spending of the Pupil and Sports Premium money. The Fire Drill was reported as was the audited summary for the School Fund.

Curriculum Committee met on 19<sup>th</sup>. September and reviewed a number of documents. The updated School Development Plan was reviewed and agreed. The updates to the prospectus were also agreed.

The committee reviewed and agreed to update the following policies:

Homework

Attendance

Healthy Eating

Collective Worship.

Pay and Finance Committee reviewed and accepted the new budget plan and conducted a pay review and review of the staffing structure on 14<sup>th</sup>. November.

The committee discussed the implications for the next few years of the change to the funding formula.

Members of the Governing Body Premises Committee met on Tuesday 28th November 2017. The Committee considered and approved two revised policies, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Stress Policy.

Governors also considered an action plan produced by the Head Teacher and Governor (Helen Singleton) following an Audit of the Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing. A number of issues have been identified and target dates for completion have been set.

Governors also undertook their routine health and safety inspection of the school focussing on the internal layout. A number of minor issues were identified and an action plan to resolve them produced.

**CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY:** The children all enjoyed wearing their Christmas jumpers on Tuesday and we were over-whelmed by the donations for the local food bank. All the donations were collected yesterday and taken ready to be distributed. Many thanks for your support and I am sure you will agree it was a great idea from our School Council.



#### **FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES:**

Friends of Buckstones have had a busy term organising the Christmas Fair and discos. The Christmas Fair was a huge success raising £1461.11! Thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes, tombola prizes, teddy bears, cakes and much more. Thank you to parents who came to help set up the fair and man the stalls.

We also raised £305.80 on the Christmas Draw Tickets. Thanks to all who bought tickets and congratulations to our winners Mrs Gloster £100, Mrs Collinge £50 and Mr and Mrs Senior £25.

Friends of Buckstones sold raffle tickets for two lovely hampers at the Christmas Nativities. We raised £206! Congratulations to our winners.

We held our Christmas Discos on Thursday. All the children had a great time and we raised £527.08.

Thanks again for all your support and Happy Christmas from Friends of Buckstones! Every penny we raise goes back into the school which will benefit your child!

**PANTO:** The whole school visited Oldham Coliseum to watch the pantomime 'Dick Whittington'. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We were singing, shouting, clapping and dancing in our seats!! The children behaved beautifully and we were very proud of them. What a great morning - so good we've booked for again next year!

### **SICKNESS**

Can I remind all parents that if their child has been sick or has had diarrhoea then they are not to return to school until 48hours after their last bout of illness.

### **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS:**

School will be closing on Tuesday 19th. December for 2 weeks, re-opening on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. January.

Thank you for your continued support,

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

S.E.Healey