

Wednesday 31st. March 2021

Dear Parents,

Bonjour !

Easter Newsletter

Last week the country reflected on one year since we went into the first lockdown on the 23rd March, 2020. Who would have thought that this time last year we would still be living in these strange, challenging times? As a school we have tried hard to embrace the challenges as they have come and I do believe that amongst all of the uncertainty, worry and frustrations of the past year, we have learnt a lot and adapted to new and different ways of thinking and working, some of which we will keep, even when we come out of these times.

As always I would like to offer a huge thank you to parents for all your support through these difficult and uncertain times. My thanks to all of our pupils, for their resilience during lockdown and the way in which they have embraced the return to school - they have been amazing!

I am also incredibly proud of the way our staff have battled on, putting their own worries and concerns aside to ensure they come to school each day to provide care and support for our children whether they were in school or at home. So a huge thank you to the Team Buckstones!

I know the staff and pupils are very much looking forward to the Easter break and looking forward to the small ease of restrictions and the hope this may bring.

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:

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

Reception: What a half term it has been!

It has been wonderful just to be back together as a class again. The children have relished in seeing their friends and getting back to some form of 'normality'.

The first two weeks back together were spent focussing on emotional well-being and social skills. The work has gradually increased back to a similar timetable to the one which the children were following in December. They are now progressing well with their phonics skills and the children who read regularly at home are really starting to see their hard work pay off.

In Maths the children have been revising numbers to 20; making sure they're confident at reading, writing and ordering them all, before they move on to new mathematical concepts next term.

The topic for this half term was 'Under the Sea'. The children have really enjoyed learning about a range of different sea creatures, as well as animals we might find in water near our homes. They especially loved the experience of collecting the frogspawn from our school pond and watching it grow and change each week. This project will continue into next term.

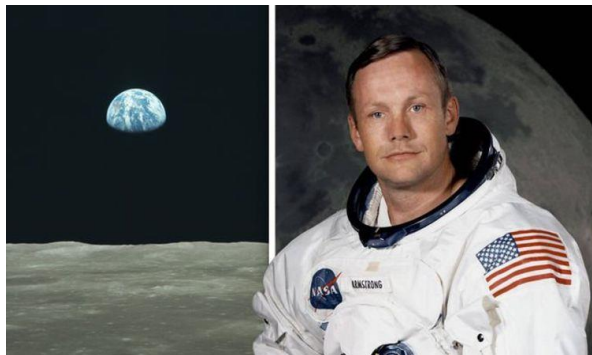


The children have also really enjoyed the forest fun and outdoor P.E. lessons. It has been great to see their confidence grow and develop in these sessions throughout the term.

What a busy half term Reception, you should all be very proud of yourselves!

Year 1: It was so lovely to welcome all the children back three weeks ago - back together, where they all belong! The home learners have settled in well and those children who had been in school welcomed them back with open arms. They worked together to earn all the spaceships on their reward chart and were rewarded with an afternoon out on the bikes and the play equipment in the glorious sunshine on Tuesday afternoon!

The children have packed an awful lot into this half-term! They have enjoyed our recent work on Information Texts in English, and have learned all about Neil Armstrong and the Apollo 11 mission, as well as finding out more about London. They proved themselves to be super detectives and did some fabulous research for both topics.



Since their return they have had fun exploring measure in maths - using non-standard units to measure length and height, and even having a go at using a ruler to measure in centimetres! This week they have enjoyed exploring mass and weight and had great fun with practical weighing

activities this week. They also continue to work on their counting skills, focusing on counting in 2s, 5s and 10s.

Over the term, in science the children have been learning all about everyday materials and their properties, as well as continuing with their work on The Seasons. Our current RE topic is an introduction to Islam and the children have enjoyed finding out more about this topic over the course of this half-term. In computing they have had fun exploring position and direction; they have completed some fabulous tasks on the computer and they especially getting our little Bee Bot robots to move around!

In Geography the children continued to learn about The United Kingdom and as a reward for their hard work they had a fabulous pretend day trip to London to celebrate the end of the topic. They came to school wearing red, white and blue, and did an amazing job designing and making their own London postcards with moving parts. We were very impressed!



Many thanks again to those of you who have worked with your child on homework tasks (including home learning, reading and spellings). It is much appreciated and really does make a huge difference. The children are now looking forward to a well-earned Easter break - fingers crossed for some sunshine!

Year 2: It has been lovely to welcome back all of our children and for them to enjoy having fun with their friends once more!

In English lessons, Year 2 have been studying the long awaited topic of dinosaurs! They have learned to pronounce some very difficult dinosaur names and use their knowledge of alphabetical order to create dinosaur indexes. The children then researched a particular dinosaur using their IT skills and created a report all about this dinosaur, including a physical description, references to what it ate, where the fossils were found and other fascinating facts!! They are looking forward to writing dinosaur poems using the four sentence types; questions, statements, commands and exclamation sentences.

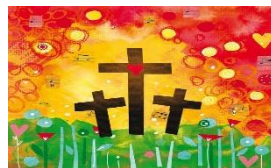


In Maths, the children have been learning about 3D shape and had great fun making models of shapes using straws and making dice from the net of a cube. The children showed great patience and resilience as these activities were very tricky. They have just started to learn about fractions, including work on halves, quarters and thirds. Please keep up with the learning of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, as the children need to be able to recall these facts quickly and efficiently, as well as knowing the associated division facts.

Our topic on St. Lucia is coming to an end and we have all enjoyed learning about this beautiful island in the sun! Along the way we have compared St. Lucia to the Isle of Coll and discussed many geographical similarities and differences. The children have created some super posters designed to attract holidaymakers to St. Lucia.



In R.E the children have learned about some of the events in the lead up to Easter, including Palm Sunday, The Last Supper and Good Friday. It has been wonderful to listen to the children's sensible and thoughtful contributions to each lesson.



Big congratulations to all of the children who have been awarded with a book prize for their many reads at home. Remember every five reads means a sticker on the bookmark. Our World Book Day was good fun. The children looked amazing in their costumes and they enjoyed all of our book related activities.

Miss Greenwood will be starting her new placement after Easter. The children and I have really enjoyed her time with us, and her I am sure you will join me in wishing Miss Greenwood every success and happiness in her future teaching career.

Year 3: First of all, I would like to say a huge 'Thank you' to all parents and children for all the hard work done at home and in school during the recent Lockdown. It was wonderful to see the children continuing their learning no matter where they were. Thank you for joining the Zoom mornings and

sending in work via Tapestry, so that we could all keep in touch as a class. It was lovely to welcome all the children back in school on 8th March and they are now settling back into a good learning routine.

Everyone in Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed World Book Day on 12th March. Their costumes were amazing and they took part enthusiastically in all the book-related activities on the day. Photographs of the day are now on the Year 3 page of the school website.

In English, I have been particularly impressed with the descriptive writing produced in response to the lessons based on the opening scenes of the BFG film. Since all the children returned to school, they have been learning how to write historical reports based on the History topic of Ancient Egypt. First they analysed the text and language features of several historical reports. After that, they researched one particular aspect of life in Ancient Egypt before planning and writing their own historical reports on papyrus. They then completed the reports by decorating them with hieroglyphs. The children have taken a great deal of care with this work to produce eye-catching and informative reports. Well done!



The children have worked very enthusiastically throughout all the history lessons about Ancient Egypt. They have investigated the importance of the River Nile and how archaeologists use artefacts to build a picture of life at that time. They have learnt about Tutankhamun, Egyptian hieroglyphs, mummification and the afterlife and some important Egyptian gods and goddesses. They have also thoroughly enjoyed designing and making their own Egyptian mummies in Art lessons.

In Maths, the children have worked hard developing their ability to use standard methods of addition and subtraction and answer a range of associated word problems. They have also developed their understanding of division with remainders and the bus stop method of division.

In PE, the children have been working hard to learn new cricket skills, and improve their running stamina with some cross country sessions. Swimming lessons for Year 3 will begin again on Tuesday, 20th April, 2021 (the first Tuesday after we return to school after the Easter holidays).

Music lessons this half term are based on music from China. Children are enjoying learning to recognize, play and compose simple tunes on xylophones using a pentatonic scale.



Year 4: Year 4 has had another fantastic half term and they have been very busy with their learning. It's been brilliant having everyone back in the classroom and they are as enthusiastic as ever to learn new things!

Maths

For the past weeks, we have been learning about money. We have been recapping our understanding of pounds and pence and how to add and subtract different amounts. Year 4 was also challenged to go on a virtual shopping trip with a list and a budget of £10. The children had to find all of the items on their list in two different supermarkets and then use their problem-solving skills to estimate, round, and find the difference between the items.

English

When the children returned to school, we decided to continue learning about chocolate making which they then used to create an explanation text about the fascinating process. We also read the fascinating book, 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' and had lots of fun on 'World Book day'



inventing chocolate bars and chocolate factories.

Recently, we have been watching a short animation called 'Ride of Passage' - a story about a young boy who befriends a giant chameleon and then goes on an amazing adventure. Soon we will be writing our own stories and describing a rite of passage that our character has to complete and describing the challenges they face along the way.

History

We have been learning about the interesting ancient Romans, especially how they affected Britain when they invaded. We have spent time learning about Roman roads, bathhouses, Hadrian's Wall, the Gods, and Goddesses and even had a drama lesson on Boudicca's rebellion.

Science

For the spring term, we have been learning about different states of matter, looking at solids, liquids, and gases. Thank you for joining us during our live science lessons. Everyone looked like they were having lots of fun at home (and in the classroom) creating cornflour slime and melting chocolate in tin foil boats! Since returning to school, we have been learning about the water cycle and how different states of matter are changed during this interesting process. We have also made our water cycles using cress seeds. The children put compost into plastic cups and added cress seeds. We watered them and then sealed them. When the cups are put in a warm place, the water in the soil will evaporate, but when it rises and touches the cling film, it will turn back into water and 'rain' on the seeds!

Well done for another fantastic term Year 4 and I am looking forward to teaching you all more during the summer term! Stay safe and have a wonderful Easter and break!

Miss Thomas

Year 5: Year 5 have been creating some lovely art work on their return to school. They have been studying the "Pop Art" work of Andy Warhol. In doing so, they have created their own drawings of "Sam" (one Andy Warhol's cats) which are on display in our classroom. They have been designing their own soups- some interesting flavours have been created indeed! They have also created some AMAZING self-portraits in the style of the famous Marilyn Monroe picture entitled "Marilyn Diptych". They created their work by tracing over a photograph and picking out their main features. Then they traced it onto an A4 page four times to create a repeat pattern. They tried two different colouring techniques. First, they used felt-tips and then coloured pencils. They tried to add the light and shadow onto their faces just like in Andy Warhol's. The finished art work looks brilliant and they should all be very proud.



It has been great to see Year 5 work so hard in PE now that they are back together. They have been working hard on team skills, multi-skills and netball skills. They have worked really well together and have completed their entire PE lessons sensibly whilst having fun.

In PSHE, Year 5 have been learning about safety and friendship. They have been spotting hazards and have been finding out ways to reduce the risk of an accident. They have been making sure that their classroom and behaviour around school is safe too.

In Science, Year 5 have been learning about forces. They have been learning the names of different forces and have been trying to use their new vocabulary to describe movements. They have been measuring using Isaac Newton's Newton meter too. They have enjoyed designing parachutes to test air resistance in order to find out which parachute slows down their parachutist most effectively.

In ICT, Year 5 have been designing their own 3D models. They have designed their own house, vehicle and packaging for an Easter treat. They have been able to manipulate the points, shape, design and layout in order to create a perfect design. They have all worked really hard in ICT this half term.

Year 6: Year 6 children have almost completed their topic on the Brazilian rainforest. The children have found out that there are two types of rainforest, where they are located, some types of animals and plants found there, the different layers and how important the rainforests are to the world. They have written a report about rainforests in general and have written a debate about whether the cutting down of the rainforest should be allowed. They have also looked at weather data to contrast conditions in Manaus and London.



Linked to the Rainforest topic, they have started their jungle art work. This is based on the work of Henri Rousseau. The children have created a background onto which they have added middle ground and finally, they will add detail using collage techniques as the foreground.

In D&T, the children have constructed cars and an electrical motor system to produce a moving car. They have created the chassis, axles, used pulleys and designed the outer body work. They have used their mathematical and scientific knowledge to measure lengths of materials and make a working electrical circuit which powers a motor.

On Friday 19th March, a member of staff from Castleshaw came in to school to work with the children. The children built their own shelters which were graded based on design, location, size and how well the shelter would repel the elements. They learned how to tie a variety of knots to assist in this activity. They worked as teams on a number of races and games as well as working together to construct their own tents. Despite the weather, a great time was had by all.

GOVERNORS

The Governors are pleased to welcome Mrs. Ann Hanaghan as a new co-opted Governor onto the Governing Body.

Governor meeting	Agenda
Full Governors - 03.02.21	<p>During the meeting the Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received a report from head teacher outlining what we have been doing in school and an overview and analysis of end of year results. Update of the School Development Plan Received a Safeguarding report Discussed minutes from Committee meetings Agreed the proposed holiday pattern for 2021-2022 Completed the Governing Body Health Check Received a report on the fire drill
Curriculum Committee Meeting - 26.1.21	<p>During the meeting the Governors agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote learning Policy Emotional Health and Well-being Policy
Pay/Finance - 9.2.21 and 17.3.21	<p>During the meeting the Governors discussed and/or agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bursar's Report Scheme for Financing School April 2020 - main changes SFVS Finance Policy Charging Policy Financial Risk Assessment Benchmarking Report Card Discussed leaving the LA's catering service
Premises/Health and	During the meeting the Governors reviewed

<p>Safety/Wellbeing/Health and Safety/Safeguarding - 9.3.21</p>	<p>and/or agreed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Audit by the LA • Safer Recruitment Policy • Safeguarding Self-Assessment
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SCHOOL LUNCHES

The Governors have also agreed that from the 1st. July the Catering Staff will become part of the Buckstones School Team as we take over the provision of school lunches. We will be asking parents to complete a short questionnaire about school lunches and also asking the pupils for their views and preferences. This will allow us to build a service that improves the quality of service currently on offer and hopefully reduce the ever increasing costs of the school meals from the Local Authority.

STATUTORY TESTING

As you may be aware the Government have postponed all Statutory testing for 2021. This includes KS 1 and KS2 SAT's, Phonics Screening, Year 4 Multiplication Checks and the EYFS Profile. School will continue to monitor and assess the progress of each pupil in school, in order that we can update parents and the next class teacher or school.

REPORTING COVID 19

Please note, should your child or a member of your household test positive for Covid 19 over the holiday please email on info@buckstones.oldham.sch.uk. Please state who has tested positive, name, date of birth and postcode. The date on which the test was taken and the onset date of their illness if there are symptoms.

This will be monitored over the break and we will contact parents if any Test and Trace issues occur.

Testing for Households and Bubbles of School Pupils

Whole families and households with primary school, secondary school and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles are eligible for home Covid testing. For a limited period there is a collection point at The Honeywell Centre, Southgate Street and Peel Street Centre car park, open from 1:30pm-7pm. Please check the Oldham website for the most up to date information before attending

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201170/coronavirus/2557/coronavirus_testing/2

WORLD BOOK DAY

We all had a wonderful World Book day on Friday 12th. March. Everyone had made so much effort with their costumes and it was a lovely way to celebrate our first week back altogether in school.

FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES

The Friends of Buckstones Easter Egg competition has been a great success. The Easter Egg Competition which has raised £123 for the school. The entries were amazing and we are amazed at the standard of the competition. The winners all received an Easter egg which were kindly donated by Mrs. Marsden and Mrs. Mills. Thank you to everyone who entered.

Also Mrs. Bromley who is a grandparent and works for N Brown and her company have generously donated 4 iPads for us to use in the classroom and support the teaching and learning of the children.



RETURN TO NORMAL FULL SCHOOL UNIFORM

As we return to school after the Easter Holidays we ask that pupils return in their full school uniform every day. The additional layer required in the winter months is no longer needed and pupils should return to wearing their school jumper or cardigan and black school shoes.

The last day of school will be a non-uniform day and our theme is to wear red and yellow. Please send in a voluntary contribution of £1 in an envelope.

School reopens on Monday 19th. April



Thank you for your continued support,

S.E.Healey