

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>. October 2021

Dear Parents,

Bonjour !



### Autumn Half Term Newsletter



I would like to thank you for your support and co-operation during our first half term back into school. All the children have settled back into school and I am extremely proud of all of them.

#### **CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:**

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

The teachers have all written about what their classes have been doing this half term.

**Reception:** Reception have settled in extremely well and have made an excellent start to their school life. They are following the rules and expectations brilliantly and have all enjoyed making new friends.

The topic for the half term was 'Ourselves'. Through this topic the children have taken part in a wide range of different activities which have allowed them to think about and describe themselves in different ways, as well as getting to know each other better.

In English the children have enjoyed reading a range of Mr Men and Little Miss books and have been comparing themselves to the different characters. They have also loved reading the book 'Funnybones' and have used it as a focus for thinking about their bodies. The children have been working very hard in their daily phonics lessons and were all very excited to take their first reading



books home!

In Maths the children have been reading, writing and ordering numbers to 5. They have loved singing different number songs and also watching the fantastic 'Numberblocks' episodes to help



them learn about the different numbers too.

The children have particularly enjoyed their forest fun sessions, where they have experienced all types of weather over the last few weeks! They have loved having the freedom to explore, climb trees and collect lots of natural treasures to bring back to our classroom to investigate and create with.

What a busy and wonderful first half term in Reception!

**Year 1:** We are so pleased with how well the children have settle into Year 1! They have had a very busy first half term and they should be very proud of themselves and all that they have achieved. 😊



Much of our **English** work has been based around stories and poetry. The children have been looking at stories in familiar settings and have really enjoyed reading 'The Gruffalo' and making their own WANTED posters. They have also produced some lovely alphabet, autumn and senses poems.

In **phonics** they are busily working their way through the Phase 3 phonemes and it is lovely to see their hard work paying off in their reading and spelling. We also continue to have a big 'push' on **handwriting** and correct letter formation - many thanks to those of you who are supporting us with all of this at home.



In **maths**, the big 'push' for the children has been making sure their numbers are formed correctly, as well as securing their understanding of the language of place value. They have been working on calculations within 10 and are doing well learning their number bonds to 10. They have especially enjoyed singing songs to help them with their maths learning.

In **Science** they have been learning about the parts of the body and have enjoyed investigating the senses. They have also been looking at seasonal changes and what happens to our environment during the autumn season. An autumn walk was just the trick for experiencing the leaves changing colours and falling to the ground.

Much of their **Computing** work has been topic-related and they continue to enjoy their time in the computer suite. They have also been looking at how to keep safe when using the internet through stories such as Smartie Penguin and Digi Duck.



Their **artwork** this half term has focused on painting - they have learned about colour mixing and have looked at the work of two famous artists (Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky). They have gone on to produce some lovely artist-inspired creations, which have turned out really well.

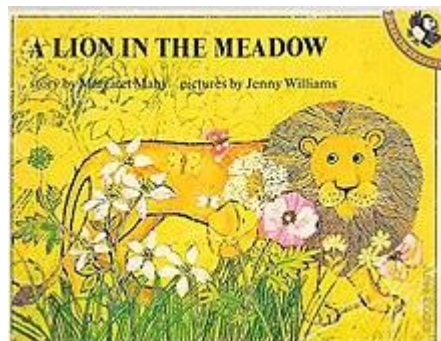
As part of their **Geography** work on our Local Area, they have had fun outside exploring our school grounds. They have been on senses walks and have done a wonderful job sketching what they can see from the playground. The next step is for them to learn about maps and plans, starting with them drawing a map of how they get to school.

Many thanks to those of you who complete homework tasks, including hearing your children read and practising spellings at home - it really does make a difference ☺

We are all very proud of how hard the children have worked this half term and we are sure they are now looking forward to a well-deserved rest!

**Year 2:** It was so lovely to welcome the children back to school in September! We are so proud of how quickly the children have settled into life in Year 2!

In English lessons, the children have created their own stories based on 'The Lion in the Meadow' by



Margaret Mahy.

Then, following on from reading 'The Shopping

'Basket' by John Burningham, they have had great fun writing instructions for an elephant dance, and then an animal of their own choice using a selection of sentence openers and bossy verbs!! Also a big 'well done' to everyone for trying hard to learn and use their weekly spellings. We are hopeful that they will get some excellent results in our 'Grand Spelling Test.'

In Maths, the children have been studying place value and then addition and subtraction. We have been really impressed with their knowledge of number bonds to 10 and 20. They have recently resumed 'Big Maths Beat That' and are working hard to beat their score from the previous week as they tackle quick-fire addition sums.

Our Geography topic started with a very interesting trail around Shaw!!! The children followed a series of instructions to guide them from school into the town centre. Along the way they looked at the types of buildings, houses and shops they could see, and discussed how the landscape of Shaw has changed over the years. We were really impressed by how well the children behaved as they walked into town and were super proud of their observations and questions. We are looking forward to studying the history of Shaw, and finding out about the cotton mill industry.

Year 2 have had great fun drawing different types of puppets and discussing similarities and differences in how they are operated. Thank you so much for letting us borrow your puppets from home. This has led to the children designing their own animal hand puppet. They have shown great patience in pinning a paper template to a piece of felt material and cutting out their puppet independently. The gorgeous finished puppets are on display in school and have already received



many compliments from children in other classes!!

Our Science topic this half term has been 'Growth and Health.' The children have discussed a variety of life cycles, looked at the difference between babies, toddlers and adults, as well as looking at what it means to have a balanced diet. They also explored the importance of exercise in our daily lives and had great fun working in teams to design and demonstrate their own fitness stations.

**Year 3:** The children have settled into Year 3 and the Juniors very well this half term. They have worked extremely hard and their behaviour has been excellent. Well done, Year 3. Keep it up!



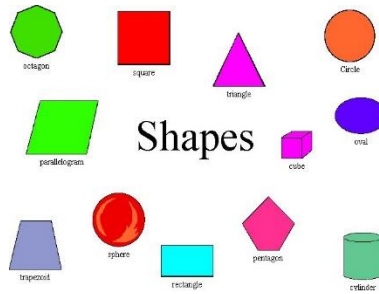
In English, the children have been working very hard writing descriptions of familiar settings, based on the book *I'll Take You to Mrs. Cole!* by Nigel Gray. The children have written recipe instructions for their special sandwiches as part of their DT topic work, and some beautiful colour poems, based on the book *A Song of Colours* by Judy Hindley.

The main topic this half term has been the Science Topic: Animals including Humans, focusing on Food and Nutrition. The children have enjoyed learning all about the different food groups and how to create a balanced meal. They have been finding out about the functions of the human skeleton and animals that have different types of skeletons. They have also been learning how muscles work and how they allow us to move.

In the DT topic linked to this unit of work, the children investigated, designed, made (and ate!) some eye-catching and healthy sandwiches for special occasions. They worked with a great deal of thought and care and I have been very impressed by their original creations, which can now be seen on the school website.



Maths work has centred on place value, addition and subtraction, including mental calculation strategies, problem-solving and reasoning. The children have worked very hard and have enjoyed being challenged. They have also been extending their knowledge and understanding of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes.



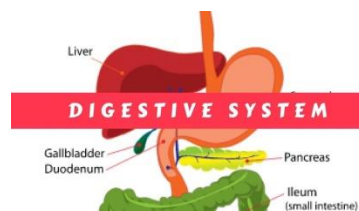
In RE, the children have worked very thoughtfully during the Judaism unit: 'What do Jewish people believe and how do they live?' They have listened to the Story of Abraham, seen what a Jewish home looks like and learnt how and why Shabbat, Hanukkah and Passover are celebrated in Jewish families.

The children have made a great start in French lessons, learning lots of everyday greetings and some common conversation questions. They have thoroughly enjoyed the French songs we have learnt so far.



Swimming sessions are now well under way, and the children are enjoying their weekly trip to Royton Pool. In Outdoor Games, the children have worked very hard with Mr. Thompson from Sports Development improving their hockey skills Well done Year 3!

**Year 4:** Our first topic this half term was Humans and other animals. The children learnt all about the different parts of the human digestive system and how it works.



They also found out about different types of teeth and why animals don't all have the same types of teeth.

During their PE lessons, the children practised their own gymnastic routines using balances and rolls. They were aiming to make the transition from balance to roll really smoothly and they managed it really well.

In Maths, Year 4 have studied number and place value. They learnt how to add and subtract 10, 100 and 1000 to any number as well as multiples of these numbers. They worked on rounding any number to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000 which is a very tricky skill. They have also been working on addition and subtraction and have been learning how to use the standard methods accurately.

In Art, the children in Year 4 have been learning how to draw people. They looked at the work of LS Lowry and some step by step instructions to help them draw a scene with people moving.



In English lessons, the children have written their own news report about how the pandemic has affected children's dental health in the UK. They have also been learning about different types of figurative language in poetry such as similes and metaphors. They have even had a go at writing their own with some impressive results.

**Year 5:** Year 5 have been learning about The Vikings in their topic-work this half-term. They have found out why the Vikings first invaded Britain and have learnt about Viking hierarchy. They have found out about Viking customs and beliefs and how the Vikings came to settle in Britain. They have imagined what it would have been like to be a Viking and have enjoyed writing using Viking runes. Their reports on Viking Life have been very informative and interesting to read.



In science, Year 5 have been learning about materials and their properties. They have enjoyed completing plenty of experiments and investigations with materials and have learnt a lot of new vocabulary such as: dissolving, permeable, impermeable, mixture and solution.

In RE, they have been learning about values including the values of Humanists. They have been learning about how Humanists like to follow a code of conduct in order to be good people. They have found out about some of the rules/principles Humanists follow and have compared them to Christian beliefs.

In ICT, Year 5 have made striking E-safety posters. They have learnt about how to stay safe online which included making strong passwords, safe usernames and being aware of the dangers when sharing information online. They worked really hard combining their Microsoft Word skills and knowledge to create informative, attractive E-safety posters for the other pupils in school. They have also been looking at cyberbullying with a focus on how to recognize it and deal with it.

Year 5 have created some wonderful tints, tones and shades strips in art. They have been learning how to use a paintbrush accurately and have been mixing watercolours to create new colours. They will be using their knowledge of tints, tones and shades to create calm and violent colour mixes for a painting of a volcanic eruption.

The first half term of Year 5 has finished with a careers week, which involved participating in a variety of virtual workshops from inspirational speakers from the world of work. Careers week has helped to raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes, broaden horizons and give the children access to new opportunities. The virtual event included a mixture of live and pre-recorded workshops and also messages from inspirational people across Oldham. I am impressed with how well the children participated and engaged with all of the sessions. I am also impressed with how well they have settled in to their new routines and into Year 5 life in general. Well done Year 5!

**Year 6:** Year 6 children have looked at the causes which led to the Second World War, starting from 1929 and the Wall Street Crash. They have researched evacuation of the cities during the



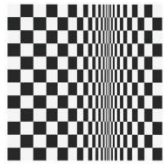
war and the importance of the Battle of Britain.

In science, the children have constructed circuits with varying components and number of components to see the effect on the circuit, read and drew rectilinear circuits and attempted 'trouble-shooting' by explaining why some circuits did not work.

For R.E. the children have looked at the different types of suffering in the world and what really matters to them. They have discussed gratitude and how showing gratitude can have a positive impact on people's lives.



During D&T sessions they have looked at optical illusions and how to draw these. They have compared the effect of using just black and white or two colours to see which is more effective.



This is the build-up to creating a sewn calendar in textiles.

Computing lessons this term have revolved around how to keep safe online. Children assessed the number of hours spent on electronic devices with Internet facilities and/or television etc. They designed a game which incorporated a range of signs and warnings related to different platforms to help children navigate the Internet safely.

Year 5 & 6 have been participating in the week-long MPLOY Solutions/Oldham Pledge Careers Event. This has given the children a chance to see the range of employment and further education opportunities which could be available to them post-16. They have heard from a range of people, from Oldham College, Atkins Global, Leigh Management to name but a few, who have given the children an insight into the world of work, the routes necessary to achieve their goals and the importance of education.

### **TEACHER TRAINING STUDENTS**

I am pleased to welcome Mrs Littlewood into Year 3.

Mrs Littlewood will be working alongside Mrs Charnley to support the pupils' learning.

### **GOVERNORS**

I am pleased to welcome Jenny Allen and Darren Lyon onto our Governing Body. Jenny Allen has been elected as a Parent Governor and Darren Lyon has been appointed by the Local Authority as a co-opted Governor. Both of their backgrounds are in education.

The full Governors meet on Wednesday 3rd. November.

The Curriculum/ Standards Committee met on 21<sup>st</sup>. September.

The items discussed and/or agreed were:

1. School Development Plan
2. End of Year Assessments
3. Prospectus

## **PARENTS' EVENINGS:**

It was lovely to be able to offer face to face meetings for our Parents' Evenings this term.

## **FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES:**

The AGM took place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup>. September via zoom. We are pleased to announce the elected members:

- Kim Barry reappointed as Chair.
- Charlotte Inman appointed as Vice Chair.
- Andrea Heslop reappointed as Treasurer.
- Sarah Gledhill appointed as Secretary.

I know you will support and wish them good luck in their roles.

Thank you to everyone who has taken part in our Trick or Treat Pumpkin Hunt. I look forward to seeing the decorated pictures of the pumpkins in your houses and then at school discos. Please return the answer sheet on Monday 1<sup>st</sup>. November.

Friends of Buckstones have also arranged for Christmas card templates to be sent home so the children can all design their own Christmas card. Every child will receive a personalised Christmas card but you will have the opportunity to buy a variety of items with your child's personalised design at great prices. Items include additional Christmas cards to send to friends and family, mugs, bags and tea towels. I hope you will be able to support this lovely fundraising idea.

## **DISCO**

**INFANTS 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 6.00pm-7.15pm**

**JUNIORS 4th November 2021 6.00pm-7.15pm**

ENTRANCE £3.00 to be paid via PARENTPAY

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE ON SALE!

The children can come dressed in Halloween costumes or autumn colours or just whatever they want to wear for the disco.

Prices of refreshments:

Sweets 5p, 10p or 20p

Drinks 30p

Candyfloss 60p

Crisps 60p

Tattoos 50p

Hope to see lots of the children at our disco!

### **SPORTING ACTIVITIES:**

Well done to our Tag Rugby and Netball teams who both competed against other schools in tournaments at Crompton House.

I am pleased to announce that our Tag Rugby team came first and our Netball team came third.



### **COMMUNITY PROJECT**

We have become part of a community programme with other schools in Royton and Shaw. The four Year 6 Councillors are representing the school. We had our first meeting a couple of weeks ago via zoom. The children all introduced themselves and described their schools.

The year 6 community project group will meet once every half term to discuss ideas and organise projects to be carried out together to support the community locally.

This may become a social event for the children but principally it is a way of bringing children together across the locality to organise doing something for the wider community.

The first thing the children decided they would like to do is a local 'litter pick'. We will start in school, go into our school grounds and then walk round the local streets.



### **HALF TERM:**

School will be closing on Friday 22nd. October for 1 week, re-opening on Monday 1st. November.

It is non-uniform day on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>. October and the school council have decided to support MacMillan Cancer Support this half term. So please wear green or purple for this important non-uniform day and don't forget to bring in your £1.00 donation.

Thank you for your continued support,

S.E.Healey