

Tuesday 14th. December 2021

Dear Parents,

Bonjour ! Joyeux Noël



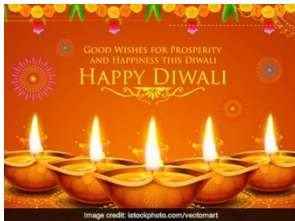
Christmas Newsletter

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:

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

Reception: Reception have had another extremely busy half term!

The topic for this half term has been 'Let's Celebrate!' The children have learnt about a range of different celebrations including bonfire night, Remembrance Day, Diwali, birthdays, weddings and of course, Christmas.

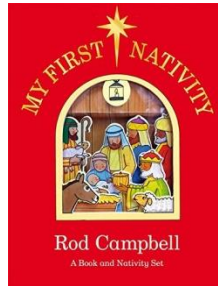


The children are progressing really well with their phonics skills. They have covered many of the 'phase 2' sounds and are now learning to blend these sounds together to read simple words. In addition, the children are making good progress with their key words at home, which will develop their reading skills even further.

In English lessons the children have been using their phonics skills to begin to write simple words, labels and lists through our topic of celebrations. They have written birthday cards, Christmas lists and even their own wedding breakfast menus!

In Maths the children have been reading, writing and ordering numbers to 10, really focussing on number formation and orientation. They have also been working very hard on ordering objects by their size.

They have had a really busy last few weeks in the run up to Christmas, starting with our trip to the pantomime and of course, rehearsing and performing so brilliantly in 'Our First Nativity'.



What a super half term Reception!

Year 1: Year 1 have had another very busy half term! ☺ This last couple of weeks in particular have been hectic, to say the least! The children have been working hard to learn their lines and songs for their Christmas show; we hope you enjoy it when you get to see it ☺ that said, the highlight so far has been the pantomime, and it was safe to say that the children LOVED it! There were lots of happy children; it was just what was needed at the end of a long, hard term.



In **English** the children have enjoyed exploring stories with repeating patterns, focusing in particular on 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. They have also read the story of 'Harvey Slumfenburger's Christmas Present', a story all about a little boy whose present gets left behind in Santa's sack. The children have written some thoughtful Christmas lists suggesting what they might get Harvey for Christmas.



As well as their place value 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! After Christmas we will be sending home a little maths pack - please look out for it coming home.



In **Science** this half term we have been looking at animals. In particular, they have been looking at the features of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and fish and comparing them. They have also been looking at what animals are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores and we were surprised that human beings are not only mammals but also omnivores!



Year 1's first **History** topic of the year has been 'Toys'; they have had fun investigating old toys and making comparisons between old and new toys. Our **Design-Technology** topic 'A Home for Teddy' fitted in nicely with this. Many thanks to those of you who supported the children with their 'Homes for Teddies' homework task - we've seen some fabulous photos and the children proudly told us how much they enjoyed making their homes. 😊



Year 1's RE work has involved them learning about Christianity - looking at parables and learning about Christmas and the links between the Christmas story and Christian practice. **PSHE** this half term has been focusing on feelings and strategies to cope with our different emotions to help us feel better. The children have also been looking at how they are all unique and the similarities and differences between them that make them all so special.

Their **Computing** work this half term has involved looking at basic computer skills when working on computers, iPads and laptops and understanding in more depth what technology actually is both in school and the world that we live in. They have also produced some gorgeous teddy bears on the computer using the Purple Mash program, which fitted in nicely with their Toys topic in history; these are now on display in the computer suite.



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 reading challenges, and learning their weekly spellings - what a 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: Year 2 have had a hardworking and enjoyable half-term!

In English the class have been looking at writing letters. Our 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!!!!

As part of our topic on 'Famous Events' we studied the significance of Remembrance Day. The children made some poppies and wrote messages of thanks on them, then planted them in the war memorial gardens. They were very proud to show their Remembrance Day homework to the rest of the class and talk about relatives who have served our country in the armed forces. Thank you so much for your support with this.

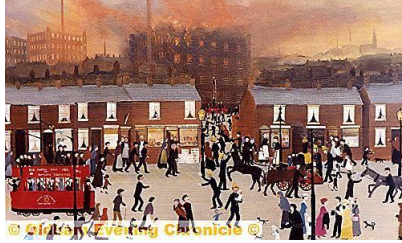


In Maths, we have been learning the names and properties of 2D shape. We have also started to count coins up to a pound and also add pound notes, using the £ notation. The children were very excited to learn the ten times table. Please continue to practise with them over the break, so that they can recall the facts instantly.

Again this half term, the children have been working well to practise their weekly spellings and the children tried so hard in the 'Grand Spelling Test'. It is important that these spellings are

continually revised and practised even after the 'Grand Spelling Test', so that the children can use them confidently and accurately in their everyday writing.

Our Art topic has been based on the work of Helen Bradley, a local artist from Lees, who includes many mill scenes of Oldham in the early 1900's. Following our fantastic visit the Oldham Art Gallery, where we saw several examples of her work, the children have looked closely at the paintings of Helen Bradley and tried to create their own version of her work. They did an absolutely amazing



job!! Well done Year 2.

In History, the children have learned what it was like to be a child in the Victorian Times. They have learned about childhood labour in the cotton mills and about what life in the Victorian home was like. They have used pictures and videos to find out about features including the range, the mangle, the gas lamp, the tin bathtub and the chamber pot!

We hope you enjoyed the Christmas Production. The children's enthusiasm and commitment was absolutely fantastic and we all had such fun recording it!!!

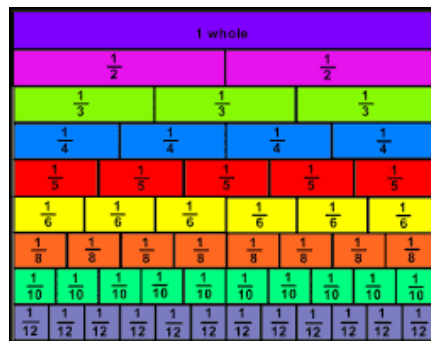
Merry Christmas from all of Year 2.

Year 3: This half term, the children in Year 3 have enjoyed many lessons taught by Mrs. Littlewood, who has been with us on a teaching placement since September. She will be spending the next term in a different school, but I am delighted to say she will return to Year 3 at Buckstones for the Summer term. She has had an excellent first teaching practice and has become a much valued member of the teaching team. We will all miss her next term.

The History topic this half term has been Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. The children have shown a great deal of interest in this topic. They have ordered a series of events on a timeline and used artefacts to make deductions about life in the past. They have used a range of information sources to investigate life in the Neolithic village of Skara Brae, and they have created a fact-file about Stonehenge. They have looked at how inventions in the Bronze Age and the Iron Age changed life, comparing and contrasting homes, tools, weapons, pottery, jewellery and art.



Maths work has involved multiplication, division and fractions, including practical activities, reasoning and investigations. They have investigated symmetry in 2D shapes and have extended their knowledge of telling the time on an analogue clock. Mrs Littlewood and I have been very impressed with the children's hard work and their growing ability to explain and demonstrate their mathematical thinking. Well done!



The English work in Year 3 this term has centred on using dialogue. The children worked extremely hard to learn the conventions of speech punctuation, writing their own entertaining versions of Beware of Boys by Tony Blundell. In addition, the children have read and performed a range of play scripts, and enjoyed writing play scripts based on a selection of nursery rhymes.

In Science, the topic has been Forces and Magnets. The children carried out a series of experiments to investigate the effects of friction on how objects move across different surfaces; which materials are attracted to magnets and which are not; how magnets attract and repel; and how to compare the strength of different magnets. They worked co-operatively and sensibly in pairs throughout these lessons and worked hard to learn and use new scientific vocabulary.



The children have continued to work hard in French lessons, learning numbers to fifteen and using these to play a range of board games and in warm-up activities in PE. They have continued to expand their repertoire of French songs.

Despite a short interruption to their weekly sessions at Royton Pool, the children have continued to make excellent progress with their swimming lessons and many certificates have been awarded for their achievements. In Outdoor Games, the children have worked very hard learning new Netball skills and playing team games. Well done Year 3!

All the children thoroughly enjoyed this year's trip to the pantomime at Oldham Coliseum and their behaviour was exemplary. They have continued with the Christmas fun, making Christmas cards and calendars and visiting the Christmas Fair.

Year 4: Our half term kicked off with our RE topic 'Why do Christians believe Jesus's death was a sacrifice?' We found out about how Catholic and Anglican Christians celebrate Holy Communion and



what it means to them.

We then began work on our Design Technology topic which is designing and making a stuffed Christmas decoration. The children have put a lot of work into designing them and they have turned out beautifully so I hope you enjoy hanging them on your Christmas tree for years to come.

Next, we carried on with our Geography topic which was all about Greater Manchester. We have been learning how to locate things using 4-figure grid references and have been comparing the way land is used in the countryside with how it is used in the City Centre. We've also been drawing line graphs to show the temperature in Shaw so this topic has included a lot of Maths!

In Maths this half term, year 4 have been comparing measures of length and finding the perimeter of rectilinear shapes. They have made some beautiful pixel art calendars and they have found the perimeter of the different parts of the picture they designed.

Our English work has been about stories set in the Victorian times. The children have watched lots of film clips and read stories set in the past to find out what authors and directors do to make it really obvious that their story has a historical setting. The children have then used this to write their own descriptive writing about a Victorian street and a story where the main character has to escape from a workhouse. We have also been continuing with our work on grammar; revisiting

fronted adverbials, expanded noun-phrases and speech punctuation.



Year 5: Year 5 have been very busy this half term creating Christmas biscuits for DT. They looked fabulous! They have been thinking about how they would use these biscuits as part of a business and how they could make a profit. In PE, they have been learning how to improve their lacrosse and netball skills. The children have really improved their attacking and defending strategies. I have been really impressed with them, especially their improvements with using lacrosse sticks to scoop, throw and catch.

In their geography topic, they have been learning all about volcanoes and earthquakes. They have discovered what volcanoes are, what causes them and what the consequences are. An exciting lesson was when they erupted their own volcano outside! This linked in nicely with our science topic as it was an irreversible change. The children have learned many interesting facts about volcanoes and earthquakes throughout this topic and have really enjoyed it. The quality of their homework was



amazing- well done Year 5!

In RE, they have been learning about how Christians celebrate Christmas around the world. They have been learning about Advent, Christingles and other ways in which Christians celebrate. Some of the traditions are quite different to the way in which Christmas is celebrated in Britain. Many children would quite like to adopt the Japanese tradition!

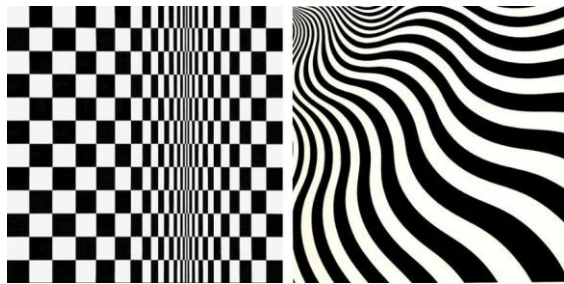
Finally, they been very crafty creating their Christmas cards and calendars for 2022. They have enjoyed making them and really hope you like them!

Year 6: Year 6 science has looked at light and how we see. The children have investigated the reflective properties of materials, how the human eye works and the effect of changing different variables on shadows.

In Geography Year 6 children have been looking at compass points and directions from one place to another. They have also learned to read latitude and longitude and have started to read 4 and 6-figure coordinates.

R.E. has included the study of why Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah. They have also looked at the Gospels of Matthew and Luke to find out about the story of Christmas. They have looked at the sacred and secular meanings of Christmas, the meaning of Advent and the similarities of Christmas festivals around the world.

Our Christmas art and design technology projects have included making Christmas cards on the theme of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and calendars in the style of Bridget Riley.



GOVERNORS: I am pleased to announce that Mr Darren Lyon and Ms. Jenny Allen have joined our Governing Body.

During the meeting the full Governors meeting:

- Received a report from head teacher outlining what we have been doing in school
- The School Development Plan
- SIP report from 2019-2020
- Discussed minutes from Committee meetings
- Reviewed the Safeguarding Policy
- Received a report on the fire drill and upcoming lockdown practice

During the Curriculum committee meeting the Governors agreed and discussed:

- School Development Plan
- End of Year Assessments
- Prospectus

During the Pay and Finance committee meeting the Governors discussed and agreed:

- Moving away from First Class emails and Unity
- Lettings Policy
- Revised Budget

During the Premises/Health and Safety/Wellbeing/Health and Safety/Safeguarding committee meeting the Governors reviewed and agreed:

- COVID outbreak plan and Actions
- Kickstart Training Plan
- Anderton Centre - residential trip

TEACHING PLACEMENTS This term Mrs. Littlewood has successfully completed her first term of her teaching placement in Year 3. Mrs. Littlewood will not be with us next term but we will have Miss Jo Edwards who will be working in Year 1.

CHRISTMAS: The children all enjoyed wearing their Christmas jumpers on Tuesday and they are looking forward to their Christmas parties this week.

FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES:

The Friends of Buckstones have done an amazing job this half term arranging the Christmas card designs, the design a cake, the Elf raffle, the Christmas raffle with so many amazing prizes and the Christmas draw.

The Christmas cake design competition was very popular and the actual cake was amazing and just like the design itself.

The raffles were drawn in assembly on Tuesday and there were lots of very happy prize winners.

The Elf has been won and has been named Buddy.

The first three prizes were:



1. Apple Watch



2. Apple Air Pods

(collected on behalf of his brother).



3. Family ticket to watch the Panto.

We don't yet have the final total for the fund raising this half term but it will be around £2,000. The money raised by the Friends of Buckstones is being used to buy much needed new Reading Books and it pays for the tickets to watch the panto.

Thank you to everyone who has supported these fund raising activities.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS:

School will be closing on Thursday 16th. December for 2 weeks and 2 days, re-opening on Tuesday 4th. January.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sarah Healey