

Wednesday 14th. December 2022

Dear Parents,

Bonjour ! Joyeux Noël



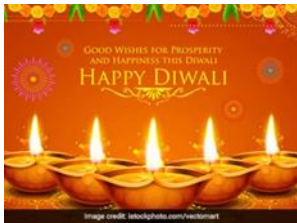
Christmas Newsletter

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.

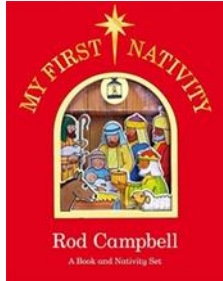


The children are progressing really well with their phonics skills. They have learnt all of the 'Level 2' sounds and are now practising blending these phonemes together to read simple words. In addition, the children are making good progress with their key words at home, which will help to develop their reading skills even further.

In English lessons the children have been using their phonics skills to begin to write simple 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 as well as learning about 2D shapes.

The children 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'. The nativity was an amazing and invaluable experience for the children; one which covered so many key skills and developed their confidence and team-work no end.



What a super half term Reception, well done!

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 enjoyed it. That said, the highlight so far has been the pantomime, 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. 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.



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.



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: In English, the children have been learning how to write a letter and we have read lots of different stories that include letters. We even received a letter from the lovely Mrs Joyce, which the children loved! The book we have based our letter writing on is 'Dear Teacher' by Amy Husband in which a little boy writes letters to his teachers with excuses as to why he will be late for school. The children found this hilarious and came up with some super excuses in their own letters as to why they are going to be late for school!

We have also been learning about repetitive poems and have based writing our own poems on Pie Corbett's 'If I had Wings'.



The History topic this term has been all about the significance of Remembrance Day. The children made some poppies and wrote messages of thanks on them, then we placed them in the war memorial gardens in Shaw. I was so proud of the children and the respect they showed whilst we were there.



Our Art topic this term has been based on the work of Helen Bradley, a local artist from Lees, who includes many mill scenes from the 1900's. The children have been looking closely at the paintings and imagining what it would be like to be inside the painting. They have tried to create their own version of her work and their final piece has been inspired by Helen Bradley's style.



The children's favourite topic this term has been Design and Technology. We researched different types of puppets and then the children had to design their own hand puppet, thinking about the materials they could use to decorate it. When making their puppet, the children had to stick to their original design and they did a wonderful job. The puppets are on display just outside our classroom and the children have received lots of lovely compliments!

Year 3: 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.



In Art, the children have developed their painting skills, mixing and using a range of colours, implements and techniques to produce some excellent Stone Age cave paintings. Well done, Year 3!

The English work 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 playscripts, and enjoyed writing their own playscript based on a familiar nursery rhyme or story.

In Maths, the children have worked extremely hard to learn the 3 and 4 times tables. They have applied their skills to a range of multiplication and division tasks and have learnt strategies for doubling and halving 2-digit numbers. They have identified unit and non-unit fractions of shapes and have compared and ordered different fractions, using a fraction wall. In addition, they have

measured lines and objects, using centimetres and millimetres and have calculated the perimeter of various 2D shapes.

In Science, the topic has been Forces and Magnets. The children carried out a series of experiments to investigate the effects of friction on objects moving 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.

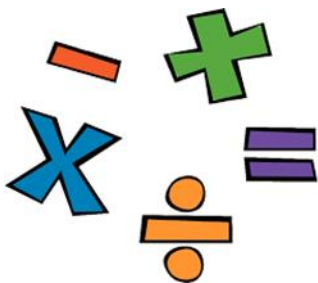
The children have worked enthusiastically in French lessons, learning how to hold a short conversation in French. They have learnt some colours and numbers to 12 and they have continued to expand their repertoire of French songs.

Following some excellent classwork in the RE topic: Jewish Festivals and Family Life, the children visited the Manchester Jewish Museum on Monday, 12th December, for their workshop: Festivals and Feasts. In addition to visiting the synagogue and the museum itself, the children had lots of fun kneading and plaiting their own Challah bread, playing traditional games and learning all about the foods associated with Jewish festivals. The staff at the museum were extremely impressed with the children's knowledge and their excellent behaviour. Well done, Year 3!



Year 4: We have had another great term in Year 4 - well done!

In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of written methods for addition, subtraction and multiplication, and have begun to explore written division. We have also been looking at fractions and decimals, weights and measure and time. We have also been focusing on our rapid recall of times table facts through the use of TT Rockstars and some times table challenges.

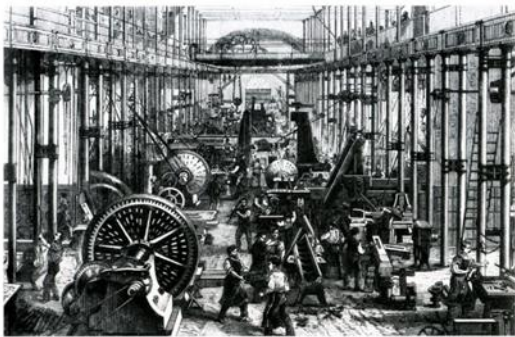


In English, we have been exploring stories based in historical settings, and have written diary entries based on Hetty Feather by Jacqueline Wilson. We have also been writing information texts all about our own imaginary creatures, looking at how we can use subheadings to structure our non-fiction writing and use technical language.



Our Science topic this half term has been Animals, including humans. As part of this, we have studied the human digestive system, human and animal teeth and food chains. The children enjoyed taking part in several demonstrations and experiments, including observing the effect of sugary drinks on teeth (using an eggshell substitute!) They have learnt the role of each part of the digestive system, the function of different types of teeth and how different animal diets determine the type of teeth they have.

In history, we have been studying the Industrial Revolution and how transport changed over this period. The pupils have explored the use of canals and railways to transport goods from across the world to Manchester to be used in factories. They have also looked at the darker side of the Industrial Revolution by considering how the slave trade was linked to the cotton industry.



We began our first Design and Technology topic this term - the pupils have been designing and creating their own stuffed hanging Christmas decorations. They have made patterns, selected appropriate materials and explored different stitches in order to create some incredible final pieces! We are sure they will look amazing on Christmas trees at home.

Outdoor P.E has been taken by Oldham Sports Development, who have been teaching the children how to play a range of invasion games with an emphasis on sending and receiving using equipment. The children have enjoyed exploring new games such lacrosse. In indoor P.E, pupils have been creating a dance inspired by a game of snooker, in which they have used partner work as well and individual dancing to show how the balls move around the table during a game of snooker.

In the run up to Christmas, the children had a fantastic time attending the pantomime of Robin Hood at Oldham Coliseum. They have enjoyed time at the Christmas Fair, and we were also treated to a performance of the Reception Nativity and Year 1 and 2's 'Christmas Extravaganza!'



Merry Christmas everyone, and Happy New Year!

Year 5: Year 5 have been very busy this half term creating festive potato cakes for DT. They learnt about different cooking methods and boiling, mashing and frying to make their product. They looked fabulous! They have been thinking about how they would use these potato cakes as part of a business and how they could make a profit. In PE, they have been learning a volcano dance. They have been very creative pretending to be magma bubbling away deep inside the volcano and erupting down the sides.

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! 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!

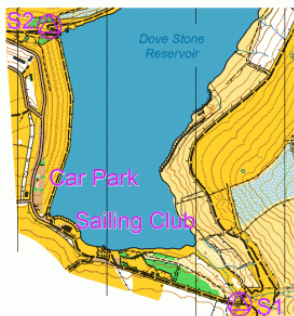


In RE, they have been learning about how Christians celebrate Christmas around the world. They have been learning about Advent, Christingles and other ways in which Christians celebrate. Some of the traditions are quite different to the way in which Christmas is celebrated in Britain. Many children would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



Finally, they been very crafty creating their Christmas cards and calendars for 2023. They have enjoyed making them and really hope you like them!

Year 6: Our geography topic this term centred around map reading. The children were able to work with a range of different maps and practised reading latitude/longitude and 4 & 6-figure grid coordinates. PE was linked to geography as the children practised their orienteering skills at Castleshaw and Dove Stones.



In Computing, children have been learning how to enter data and formulae into spreadsheets and seeing the effect changing data would have on the end results.

In Science, Year 6 children have investigated how we see in our light topic. They have constructed a light tunnel to rank different materials according to how well they reflect light and how shadows can change.




Our RE topic has focused on Christmas in the Gospels. They have looked at extracts from Matthew and Luke making comparisons about the different aspects covered in each. They have also looked at sacred and secular traditions at this time.

The children have created beautiful calendars in D&T (textiles) and Christmas cards linked to their RE topic - the theme of which was 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'.




PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

All classes have completed a questionnaire about what they think about school.

Enjoyment




	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. I enjoy and look forward to learning at school.	97%	0.5%	2.5%
2. I can take part in different extra-curricular activities, inc. music and sports.	98%	0	2%
3. I like coming to school.	98%	0.5%	1.5%

Achievement and Learning




	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. I know what I do well and how to get better.	96%	0.5%	3.5%
2. I think we are given opportunities to learn in different ways, e.g. visually, practically, through listening, working in pairs, alone, in groups, visits, visitors etc.	100%	0	0

3. I have access to different resources which help me learn, e.g. books, computers, ipads, adults, practical equipment.	100%	0	0
4. Teacher help me to do my best and challenge me.	99.5%	0.5%	0




Making A Positive Contribution

	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. I like to be helpful at Buckstones.	99%	0	1%
2. Everyone at Buckstones is expected to behave well.	100%	0	0




Staying Safe

	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. I feel safe at Buckstones school (no hurting policy, e-safety, secure building).	100%	0	0
2. Is bullying a problem in school?	0	100%	0
3. I know I can talk to an adult if I feel sad.	98.5%	0.5%	1%
4. I like having "Wellbeing Champions' or Infant Helpers to talk to.	96%	1%	3%

Physical Health and Emotional Wellbeing

	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. My school encourages me to be healthy e.g. healthy eating and physical exercise.	98.5%	0.5%	1%
2. My school encourages me to look after my emotional and mental health. E.g. buddies, Wellbeing Champions, Wellbeing Wednesday, Fudge in school etc.	98%	0.5%	1.5%

Equality

	Yes 	No 	Unsure 
1. My school encourages me to treat people with respect from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.	99.5%	0	0.5%

What do you like the most about your school? (a sample of pupils' replies)

Some of Infant replies:

Fudge (this was the most popular answer)

Story times

Everything!

Our Reception outside area (the new sandpit in particular)

Our Year 6 buddies

All the teachers

The playground (especially fast play days)

I learn a lot

I love having dinner

I like to play with my friends

I like to do work

I like to be helpful

I like everything

I like my teachers and my friends

Every year has nice teachers

I like science and Assemblies

I like to learn

Some Junior replies:

I like school because it is fun to learn

The topics because they're all different and you learn lots

The teachers because they are helpful and teach us and are lovely

School is an adventure

The friends I make and the fun I have with them

I like having a sports leader to teach us P.E.

History because it's interesting

I like maths because it is fun to learn

I like playtime and my friends

I Like all the teachers in school because they are very nice and respectful

When I need help I am always helped

I like school because we learn something new everyday

I like dinner time helping

I like school dinners

I like everything about Buckstones.

Everyone here are so kind, if I am sad someone makes me happy and the teachers help me if I am stuck

I like that I learn new things

The thing I like about school is art

I like that everyone is kind

Everybody is treated equally

I like the fact we have learning assemblies and we get to play with each other at playtime

I like going on trips each year

It is a safe environment and I learn new things every day

That school always helps me improve on my work and helps me when I am unsure

I like how many opportunities we have to learn and what we learn

GOVERNORS:

I am pleased to welcome Jill Hudson back onto our *Governing Body*. Mrs Hudson has been appointed by the Local Authority as a co-opted *Governor*. Mr James Mannix will also be joining our *Governing Body* in February. Mr Mannix has also been appointed by the Local Authority as a co-opted *Governor*.

During the full *Governors* meeting we:

Received a report outlining what we have been doing in school which included reviewing the recent parental questionnaire

Reviewed the School Development Plan

Reviewed the Pupil Premium report and Sports Premium report

Agreed the changes in the school day

Shared reports from *Governor* visits about:

- R.E.
- History and Geography
- Art
- SEND
- Attendance
- Maths
- Design and Technology
- P.E.

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Agreed the Accessibility Plan

Agreed the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection

Reported on the fire drill

CHRISTMAS: The children all enjoyed wearing their Christmas jumpers on Tuesday and all enjoyed their parties this week.

The Reception Nativity and the Year 1 and 2 Christmas Extravaganza were both a great success, thank you to everyone who came to watch it was lovely to have an audience in school again.

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 bear 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 bear has been won and has been named Snowflake.



The first three prizes were:

1. An iphone

2. Perfume
3. Perfume



The giant cracker has also been won:



We don't yet have the final total for the fund raising this half term but it will be around £1,500. The money raised by the Friends of Buckstones is being used to repair the outdoor play equipment and it pays for the tickets to watch the panto. We are also hoping it may buy some new ipads in the new year

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

Holiday Activities & Food Winter Programme

Please use the link to find out more about holiday activities. <https://www.oldham.gov.uk/haf>

The FANTASTIC activities will start as soon as school finishes for the Christmas holiday and is free for children and young people aged 5+ who are eligible for the free school meal benefit. Those who are not eligible for the FSM benefit can still participate at a small cost. We advise parents to talk to the organisations and book their children on the activities.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS:

We break up on Friday 16th. December and return on Tuesday 3rd. January 2023.

Please remember the new school times when we return: 8.50am to 3.20pm.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sarah Healey

