

Thursday 9th. February 2023

Dear Parents,

Bonjour !

Spring Half Term Newsletter

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:

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

Reception: What another busy half term it's been for Reception!

The topic for this half term has been 'Superheroes'. The children started the topic by looking at some of the traditional 'comic book' superheroes. They also loved reading the story of 'Supertato' (by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet) - and used this story as a basis for making their own fruit and vegetable superheroes afterwards! More recently the class have been learning about 'real-life' superheroes and particularly enjoyed their visit from a midwife, where they all behaved impeccably and asked some very grown-up questions too.

As well as learning about superheroes the children have also learned about the festival of the Chinese/lunar New Year. They fully embraced this topic by making their own dancing dragons, designing beautiful Chinese fans, trying out some traditional dragon dancing and their favourite part... tasting some delicious Chinese foods!

The children are progressing really well with their phonics skills. They are now all well on with learning the level 3 phonemes and are blending and segmenting simple words brilliantly. They have also been practising the correct letter formation to go with each of the phonemes that they learn and are practising the correct formation of the letters in their own names every single morning when they arrive in school.

In Maths, the children have been practising counting accurately to ten as well as studying the tricky 'teen' numbers. Recently, the children have also been learning the names and properties of 3D shapes and also enjoyed learning about 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p coins.

The recent cold, dry Winter weather has provided the children with the perfect conditions for some Wintery forest school sessions over the last half term. The children have loved having these 'hands-on' sessions where they have been able to explore the seasonal changes in a much more meaningful way.

To finish the Superheroes topic, the children finished with a special superhero-themed day, where they enjoyed coming to school in fancy dress and spending the day doing all things 'superhero'... What a SUPER way to finish a SUPER half term Reception! ☐

Year 1: Year 1 have had another busy half term! In phonics the children have now moved onto Level 5 and they continue to make good use of their phonics skills for both reading and writing. It is lovely to see their independence grow as they gain confidence in their phonics skills.

In their other English lessons, they continue to work on their SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar) skills, focusing in particular on using capital letters, full stops, suffixes and an introduction to question marks and exclamation marks. They have also been learning how to write both lower case and capital letters properly.

They started off the term by looking at Traditional Tales (in particular The Three Little Pigs). They have also been learning how to write letters for different purposes. They wrote some wonderful apology letters from the wolf to the 3 little pigs and also wrote some thoughtful letters to the team at Gallery Oldham to thank them for their trip.



The children have also really enjoyed their 'Great Fire of London' history topic. They have been keen to find out what happened back in 1666 and have done a wonderful job writing their own eyewitness accounts, written as though they were the children of Samuel Pepys. It was lovely to see so many of you at their recent topic afternoon, learning all about the man himself - Samuel Pepys!

Their recent trip to Fireground in Rochdale was most enjoyable - not only did it help to reinforce their learning about the events of 1666, the children also learned about the importance of fire safety too.



In maths they have been continuing to develop their calculation skills; they have also been working hard on recognising and comparing numbers within 50, as well as learning by heart their numbers bonds to 10. They continue to learn new maths songs to help them with their counting skills and recall of key number facts.

Their problem-solving and reasoning skills are improving all the time and they continue to do well with their counting in 2s and 10s. The children have also enjoyed their recent practical maths sessions, involving position and direction linked to algorithms.

Their latest Science topic for this term is 'Materials'. The children have enjoyed exploring the properties of a range of different materials and have been grouping objects by which material they are made from.

In particular, they have been focussing on the materials wood, metal, plastic, glass and fabric and had great fun completing a search of the school for these materials. They even conducted an experiment to see what material was the best for keeping Ted dry in the rain. That was good fun!

In art the children have been developing their printing skills and have impressed us with their imagination and ideas! Last month, they had the most wonderful morning at Gallery Oldham, taking part in a Pattern and Print workshop. They had great fun exploring the galleries, investigating patterns and then making their own printed masterpieces. They had such a lovely time!

Many thanks again to those of you who work with your child on their homework tasks - supporting your child by reading with him / her at home, but also practising spellings, playing number games and completing general homework tasks. The additional input is much appreciated and we are really starting to see a difference with those children who have the regular extra input at home ☺.

After a very hectic half-term the children are now looking forward to our half-term break!

Year 2: In our English lessons we have read a wide selection of dragon stories including 'George and the Dragon,' 'The Dragon Machine' and the 'Paper Bag Princess' as well as a more traditional story of 'St George and the Dragon.' The children wrote their own dragon descriptions and then went on to write their own fantasy story.

We have also been reading a collection of Katie Morag stories and used 'The Baking Day Secret' to inspire us to make flapjack. The children then had to write instructions of how to make them.



This half term our maths lessons have focused on multiplication. The children are continuing to learn their 2s, 5s and 10s times tables off by heart. Please continue to practice with them at home as it is so important to be secure in times tables. The children have also been finding a half and a quarter of shapes, objects and quantities. The children have also been introduced to telling the time quarter past and quarter to the hour as well as telling the time to five minute intervals.

Our Science topic this half term has been 'Everyday Materials'. The children have discussed the properties of materials, learned about their different uses and found out about some famous inventors including John Macadam. The children have discussed the importance of recycling and upcycling and I can't wait to see what the children will upcycle.

In Geography the children have been learning about the Scottish Island of Coll. This is the island that Mairi Hedderwick based her Katie Morag stories on. The children have enjoyed locating the Isle of Coll on a map and looking at the human and physical features of Coll and how life on the island is different to our own.



In RE the children have been learning about inspirational leaders and reading in detail about the life of Mother Teresa. The children have identified the positive qualities of inspiring leaders and are going to be writing an acrostic poem about their own positive qualities.



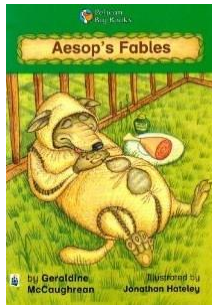
Thank you for your continued support with home reading, spellings and homework. We have a number of children who have completed their reading bookmarks and they are very proud to have their completed bookmark displayed in the classroom.

Year 3: Year 3's Geography topic this half term has been The Countries of the United Kingdom. The children have been developing their map reading skills and using atlases to name and locate towns, cities, counties, rivers, mountains and islands around the UK. They have used an eight point compass to describe the direction of travel between cities. They have considered the changing effects of immigration to this country throughout its history and, in the Geography afternoon for parents, they compared their own life to life here in the past, specifically the Iron Age.



In English, the children have worked extremely hard to read and analyse the structure of poems about the weather throughout the year and collect lots of ideas in order to write some wonderful poems of their own about each month.

Following a study of some of Aesop's fables, the children have planned and written some excellent fables based on ones they have read.



In Maths, Year 3 have been developing their understanding of place value. The children have learnt how to add 2-digit and 3-digit numbers by partitioning and how to use known number facts from their times tables to multiply and divide. They have started to place fractions on a number line, recognise equivalent fractions and calculate fractions of numbers. They have been learning how to recognise angles that are greater than, less than or equal to a right angle and they have described the properties of 3D shapes. I have been pleased with the children's ability to work co-operatively to solve problems and to explain their reasoning both orally and in writing. Well done, Year 3!

In Computing, the children have developed their presentation skills using a desktop publishing application. They have combined text and images, considering effective layouts, to produce a leaflet entitled Digital Kindness based on their PSHE work on 'Staying Safe - Digital Wellbeing.'

The children have enjoyed learning about Pentatonic Scales in Music. They have listened to and played some pentatonic melodies on chime bars, and composed simple melodies of their own which they have taught to their classmates.

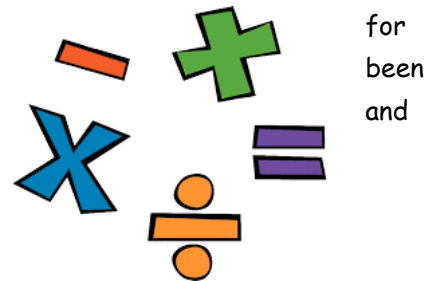


In the RE topic 'Why do people pray?' I have been impressed by the thoughtful discussions, and the imaginative and caring written work and drawings produced by the children. Well done!

Finally, in PE, the children have enjoyed learning Cricket skills this half term with Miss Knight from Oldham Sports Development. She has been very impressed with the progress they have made in such a short time. Well done, Year 3!

Year 4: Happy New Year everyone! Year 4 have made a brilliant start to 2023 - well done!

In Maths, we have been continuing to work on written methods addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. We have also deepening our understanding of fractions, shapes and angles, have drawn our own bar and line graphs. We have also been focusing on our rapid recall of times table facts and have introduced the 7 times tables into our repertoire.



In English, we have been using the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe as inspiration to write setting descriptions. We first wrote our own descriptions of Narnia, then created our own imaginary lands that could be lying 'through the wardrobe.' We have also been exploring playscripts, using 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: The Play' as our hook. We then wrote our own playscripts based on George's Marvellous Medicine.



Our Science topic this half term has been States of Matter. We have been exploring the effect of temperature on states of matter, which included conducting a (very tasty) experiment using chocolate and rice crispies! The highlight of this term's science was our class trip to Eureka! The children took part in a fantastic show all about energy and explored the different exhibitions around the museum. The children had an amazing time and loved connecting their existing scientific knowledge to what they learnt at the museum.

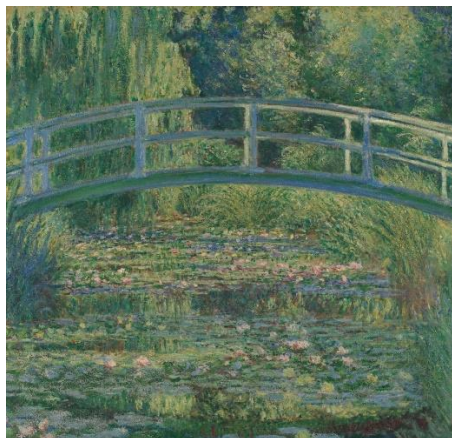


In geography, we have been on a journey to the South of

France, finding out all about Marseilles. The children have explored tourism in the area and created amazing tourist leaflets detailing what there is to do in Marseilles. We have also been comparing the land use and climate in Marseilles and Manchester.



This half term's art topic has been based on Monet. We have practiced using Monet's colour palette and techniques to recreate our own impressionist artworks.



Outdoor P.E has been taken by Oldham Sports Development, who have been teaching the children how to play cricket. In indoor P.E, the pupils have been creating their own gymnastic routines using apparatus. We have been combining balances, jumps and rolls to create sequences in pairs.

Year 5: Year 5 have been creating 3D models in computing. They have designed houses and cars, both with lots of intricate detail. These have been printed and constructed into 3D models and they look great!

In PE, Year 5 have been working hard to create sequences in gymnastics. Their jumps, balances and rolls have become much tidier, still, tight and controlled. They have been able to create sequences both in cannon and unison with members of their group.

In science, they been studying Earth and Space. They have learnt lots of interesting facts about our solar system, particularly the Earth, Sun and Moon. They have really enjoyed memorising and sharing interesting facts about the planets with one another, and especially enjoyed recalling the



order of the planets with silly rhymes.

In PSHE they have been learning about the importance of taking care of money and how the effects money can have on emotional wellbeing. They enjoyed finding out about financial risk and learnt a few handy lessons regarding investment by playing a game. They have also been learning about relationships and the different relationships that exist. They have discussed individual differences and uniqueness and have celebrated their own differences.

In History, they have started learning about an Early Islamic Civilisation: Baghdad. They have enjoyed finding out about how the location of Baghdad helped it to develop into the Round City and why it was so successful in the Golden Age. They drew some excellent diagrams of the Round City



labelled using historical sources.

Year 6: Our geography topic this half term has been about the rainforest. The children have identified tropical rainforests around the world and have focused mainly on the Amazon rainforests. They have looked at how the Amazon rainforest is being destroyed, its importance to the world and how the rate of deforestation can be slowed or halted. PE was linked to geography as

the children created, rehearsed and performed a rainforest dance.



In Computing, children have been learning how to use block coding to change shapes and create a game by changing different variables.

In Science, Year 6 children have been using keys to identify different plants and insects. They have also created their own key using yes/no questions.

Our RE topic has focused on inspirational people. This includes people who inspire us in our everyday life as well as how Jesus was an inspiration to Christians.

The children have researched the life of Henri Rousseau and have looked at examples of his painting. They are going to use these ideas to create a collage of the Amazon rainforest.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Yoga: Miss Knight runs football training for the children on a Thursday night for Years 3 and 4.

Football: Mr Rawlinson runs a football club for Years 5 and 6 on a Monday night.

Art Club: Year 1 children are enjoying creating wonderful pieces of art with Miss Platt.

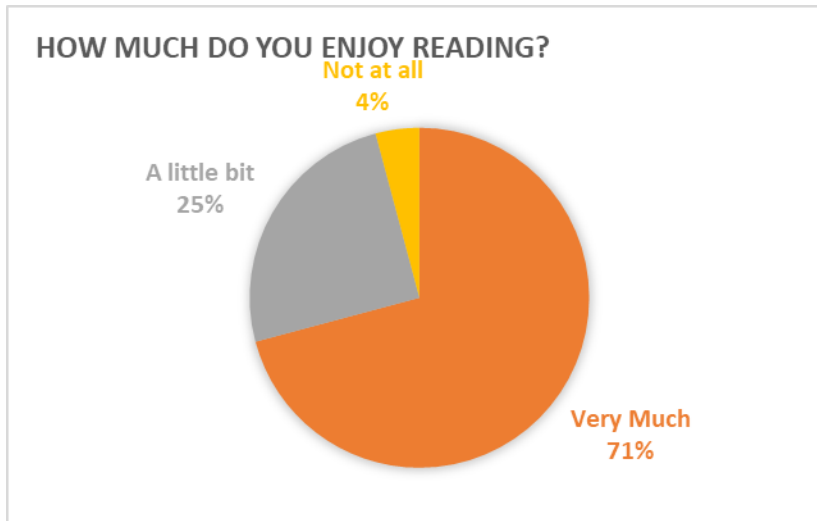
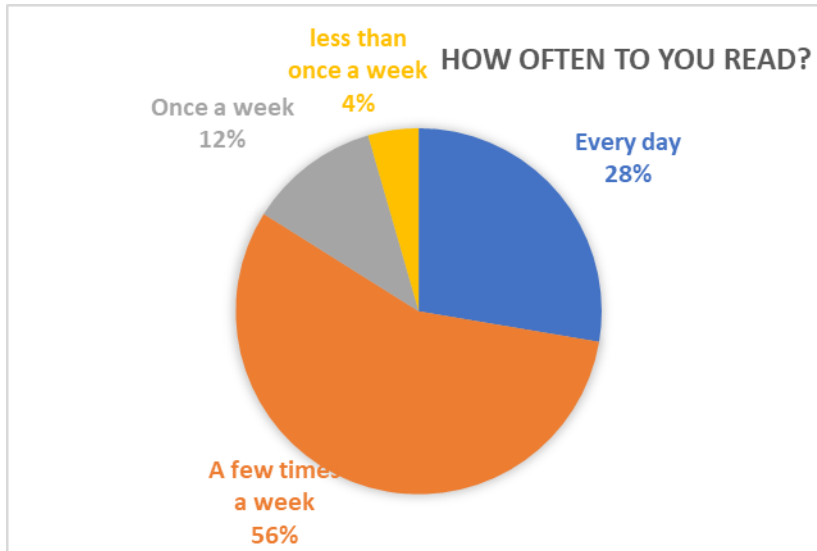
GOVERNORS: On Wednesday 1st. February the Governing Body met. During this meeting the Governors:

- Received a head teacher's report outlining what we have been doing in school
- Reviewed the School Development Plan
- Reviewed our safeguarding procedures and training

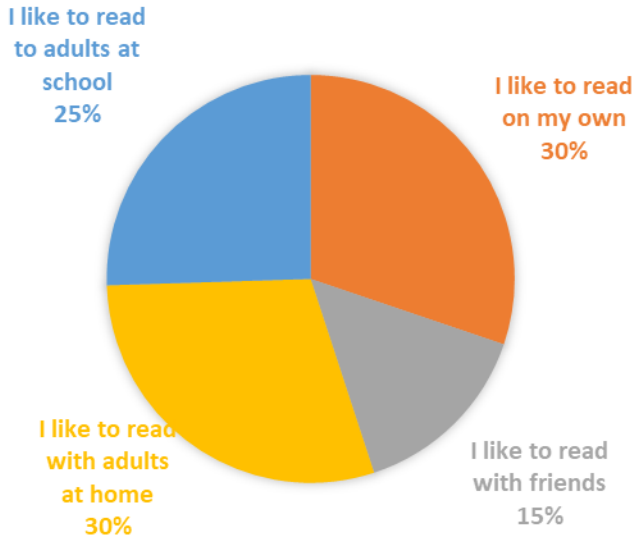
- Reported on the fire drill and lockdown drill
- Review the SEND Local Offer and agreed the SEND Policy

We also welcomed Mr James Mannix onto the Governing Body as a co-opted Governor.

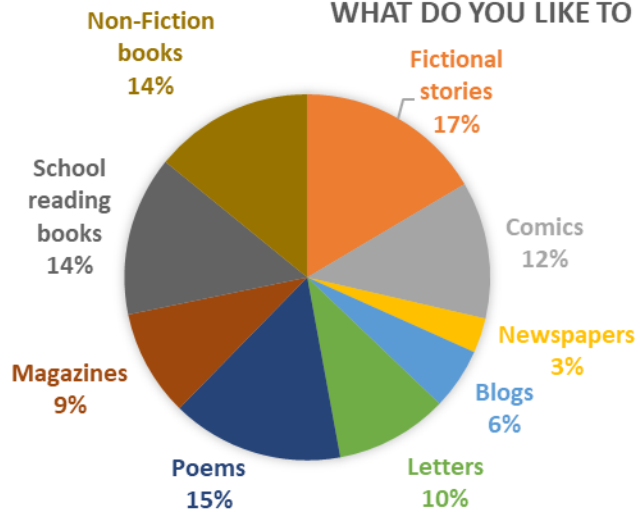
Curriculum Committee looked at standards and our recent Junior Reading survey.



WHO DO YOU LIKE TO READ WITH?

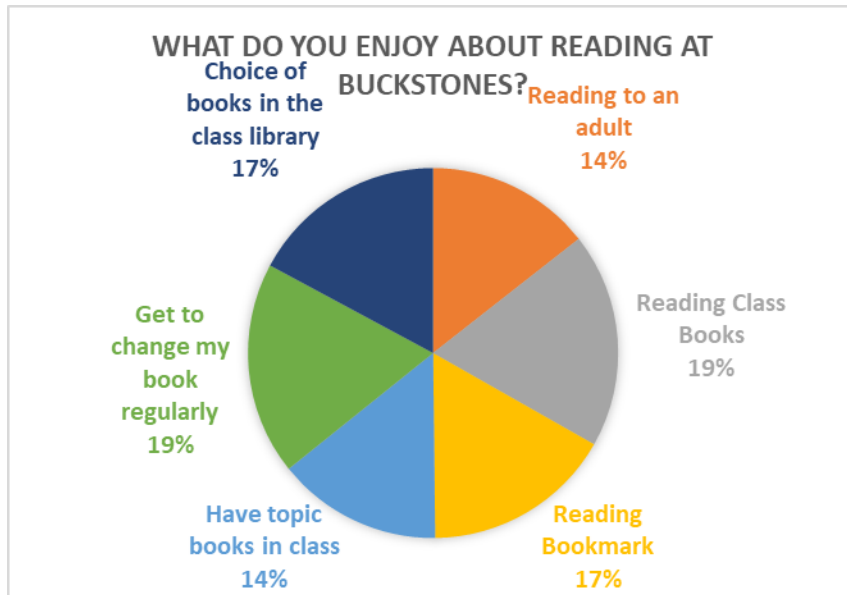


WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO READ?



DO YOU VISIT AND BORROW BOOKS FROM THE LOCAL LIBRARY?





Governors also reviewed and agreed the following policies:

- Phonics Policy
- Writing Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Maths Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy

FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES

The money raised so far this year has been put towards the new iPads and a new iPad trolley and cases. Also, the money we have received from Asda has been used towards our new football kit alongside the donations from our non-uniform sporty day. The new kit brought us luck as we won both our football matches last Friday when it was the first time we wore it.

The children have all enjoyed the discos this week. A big thank you to all the volunteers who have arranged them and helped out on the evenings.

PARENTS EVENINGS

Parents Evenings this year are on Tuesday 21st. February and Thursday 23rd. February. Please make an appointment via parentmail.

SATS

Thank you to all the parents who attended the SATs meeting this half term. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the changes to the SATs and how to support the children in Year 2 and Year 6 so they are fully prepared for the tests in the summer.

NON-UNIFORM DAY

The School Council have organised the non-uniform day on Friday 10th. February. The theme is sports clothes. The money raised will be put towards a new football kit we have bought.

School reopens on Monday 20th. February.

Thank you for your continued support,

S.E.Healey