

Thursday 15th. February 2024

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 stimulus for making their own fruit and vegetable superheroes afterwards!



More recently, the class have been learning about 'real-life' superheroes and particularly enjoyed visits from real-life superheroes from within our Buckstones' family, including a midwife, nurses, a paramedic and an army veteran.

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 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 and are perfecting the correct formation of the letters in their own names every morning when they arrive in school.

In Maths, the children have been practising counting accurately to twenty, particularly focussing on 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 weather has provided the children with the perfect conditions for some Wintery forest school sessions. 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.

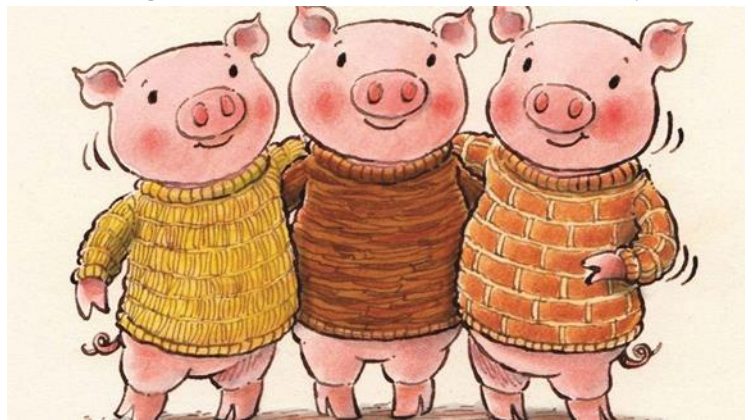


To finish the Superheroes topic, the children finished with a special superhero-themed day, where they enjoyed coming to school in fancy dress and spending the day doing all things 'superhero'... What a SUPER way to finish a SUPER half term Reception!

Year 1: Year 1 have had another busy half term!

In 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 lovely 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. They are now looking forward to their materials workshop after the holidays.

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: We started this term with a visit from Mr Plater, the curator of the Hull Dinosaur Museum, who brought with him some amazing artefacts, including the skull of an Allosaurus, a Tyrannosaurus Rex's tooth, claws, bones and some wonderful fossils. The day was a huge success

and the children loved seeing and holding all of the amazing artefacts.



'Dinosaur Day' really inspired our writing in our English lessons and the children have produced fantastic reports about their chosen dinosaur. The children carried out their own research, wrote and published their own fact files. This week the children are writing their own dinosaur poems using the four sentence types; questions, statements, exclamations and commands. We are very much looking forward to the children performing their poems too, thinking about their tone of voice and actions to include.

In Maths, the children have been continuing to develop their understanding of place value, adding and subtracting two 2-digit numbers and mastering our number bonds to twenty and to one hundred. The children have enjoyed identifying the properties of 3D shapes and learning to tell the time to quarter past and quarter to the hour.

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.

This term, the children have enjoyed their PE lessons with Mr Brierly from the sports development team and they have been mastering a range of 'net and ball skills'.

Well done to all the children for their home reading and reading challenges, it is lovely to see their reading challenges on Tapestry!

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 and they have considered the changing effects of immigration to this country throughout its history.



In English, the children have worked extremely hard to read and analyse the structure of poems about the months of the year. They have collected lots of ideas in order to write some wonderful poems of their own about each month. These have been presented in a class book that will be kept in the class bookcase for all to read. Following a study of some of Aesop's fables, the children have worked hard to plan and write their own 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. They have described the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and have learnt how to calculate the perimeter of simple shapes. The children have demonstrated the 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.' These will be displayed in the Computer Suite.

In DT lessons, the children have investigated Structures and how they are strengthened. They have focused their work on Gift Boxes, collecting ideas from real life and from the Internet. They

experimented with different 3D shapes and strengthening/protecting materials before designing and making their own eye-catching gift boxes.

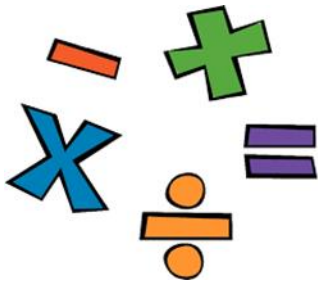
The RE unit of work this half term is 'What do Muslims and Christians believe about worshipping God?' The children have been learning the core beliefs about each religion, considering similarities and differences, and relating these to their own ideas. They have had some thoughtful discussions, and produced imaginative and caring written work and drawings. Well done!

Finally, in PE, the children have enjoyed their Dance lessons this half term, using the resources from the new *Get Set 4* PE scheme. They were very inventive with their ideas for dance sequences and routines for the two units, 'Machines' and 'A Trip to the Beach'. The children worked individually, in pairs, in groups and as a whole class to create, develop, rehearse and perform their dances. Well done Year 3!

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!

Year 4: Happy New Year everyone! Year 4 have made a brilliant start to 2024 - well done!

In Maths, we have been continuing to work on written methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. We have also been deepening our understanding of fractions, shapes and angles, and have drawn our own bar and line graphs. In addition, we have 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*. Many of us even found a theatrical side we didn't know we had!



This half term we have introduced our new Science topic, States of Matter. So far, we have identified the material and particle properties of solids, liquids and gases and have even had a go at becoming each state in a whole class demonstration! We will be continuing the topic next half term.



Solid...



Liquid...



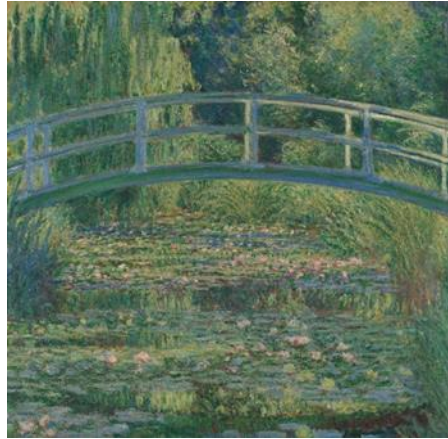
Gas!

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. The children have also produced some incredibly creative research projects on the life of Claude Monet.



Outdoor P.E has been taken by Oldham Sports Development, who have been teaching the children how to play netball. In indoor P.E, the pupils have been testing their fitness, focusing on developing their speed, strength, stamina, balance, agility and coordination through a range of different exercises.

Year 5: Year 5 have been creating 3D models in computing using the Purple Mash program '2Design and Make'. We have designed houses, cars and other objects whilst thinking about the shape and details included.

In PE, Year 5 have developed their tennis skills during our outdoor sessions. We have learnt how to use forehand, backhand and volley shots with a greater level of accuracy. During the indoor sessions, we have taken part in a wide range of fitness related activities including press-ups, planks and squats. The children have developed their determination, stamina and endurance whilst taking part in some challenging tasks.

In Science, we been studying Earth and Space. We have learnt lots of interesting facts about our solar system, particularly the Earth, Sun and Moon, and have focused on how these interacted with



each other.

In PSHE, we have focused on identifying and assessing risks. We have looked where risks might occur in our day-to-day lives and what actions we could take to minimise them.



In History, we have learnt 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.

In French, we have learnt the names of different animals we might have as pets and how to say we do or do not have them.

In RE, we have compared the differences in how Christians and Muslims pray. We thought about why people pray and learnt some facts about both religions.

We have started reading 'Wonder' as a class text and have enjoyed learning about August (Auggie) and how he has started school. The children have shown fantastic maturity during our class discussions about the topics in the book, and we look forward to continuing this next half-term.



Year 6: Year 6 children have been learning about rainforests. They have located the tropical rainforests of the world, focusing on the Amazon rainforest. They have found out about the different layers of the rainforest and the animals found in each layer. They have also looked at the causes of deforestation and the damage caused as a result.



Art is linked to the rainforests as they have looked at the work of Henri Rousseau and are currently in the process of creating a collage of a jungle scene.



In Science, the children have been looking at classification of plants and animals. They have used decision tree diagrams to identify these and created their own to classify and name different types of leaves. They have also found out information about Carl Linnaeus - the father of classification.

In R.E., the children have discussed inspirational people and the qualities of an inspirational person.

Year 6 children have begun their coding topic which involves programming using more complex variables to manipulate inputs and create useful outputs.

TOPIC AFTERNOON: We are pleased to invite you to our topic afternoon on Friday 16th. February. This is a chance for you to see the topic work the children are doing in class and join in with the activities. Due to space only 1 parent per child please. The afternoon will start at 2.30pm.

GOVERNORS: On Wednesday 31st. January 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

FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES

The money raised so far this year has been put towards repairing the playground equipment, paying for the trip to the Panto, PE equipment and each class has also received £200 each to buy resources for their class.

Reception has also received a donation from the CO-OP to buy new equipment for their outdoor area. Mrs Pearson has chosen to buy a Reading hut and a phonics and maths. storage unit. Ms. Jenny Allen (our Early Years Governor) came to officially open the new equipment on Friday 2nd February.

I am sure the children will all enjoy the discos this week. A big thank you to all the volunteers who have arranged them and help out on the evenings.

PARENTS EVENINGS

Parents Evenings this year are on Tuesday 27th. February and Thursday 29th. 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 6 so they are fully prepared for the tests in the summer.

School reopens on Monday 26th. February.

Thank you for your continued support,

S.E.Healey