

Monday 16<sup>th</sup>. December 2024

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 all of 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.



Circle



Triangle



Square



Rectangle

The children have had a really busy last few weeks in the run up to Christmas. They performed brilliantly in 'Our First Nativity', which was an amazing and invaluable experience for all of the children; one which covered so many key skills and developed their confidence and team-work enormously. They also had a great time on their first school trip to the pantomime and at the Christmas fair.



What a super half term Reception, well done all of you! ☺

**Year 1:** Year 1 have had another very busy half term ☺ This last couple of weeks in particular have been very 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 as much as the children did ☺ The trip to the pantomime has also been a highlight; it was just what was needed at the end of a long, hard week.



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, calculation and 2d shape 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!



In **Science** this half term they 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 they 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. This has linked nicely with their first **Design-Technology** topic of the year - 'A Home for Teddy'. The children got to show off their designing, making and teamwork skills when working together to build homes for some of their class teddies.



Their **Computing** work this half term has involved looking at key 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 impressed us with their creativity and iPad skills when they created their gorgeous Christmas card designs - each one is unique but they all look brilliant!.



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.



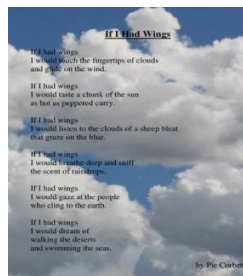
Finally, we would like to say a big well done to all those children who have been reading regularly at home, completing their homework tasks and reading challenges, and learning their weekly spellings - what a great job, keep it up! ☺

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:** It's been a very busy half term for Year 2 and the children have worked extremely hard. They were all superstars in our Christmas Show and they should be very proud of how much effort they put in to learning their lines and songs. Well done Year 2! The children have also really enjoyed the Christmas Fair and they especially enjoyed watching the Pantomime.

In Maths the children have been focusing on adding and subtracting 2-digit numbers using a range of approaches. They felt very grown up when column addition was introduced. The children have also been counting in multiples of 2s, 5s and 10s, and using different coins to find given amounts.

In English, the book we based our letter writing on is called 'Dear Teacher' by Amy Husband. The story is all about a little boy who writes letters to his teacher with crazy excuses as to why he will be late for school. The children found this hilarious and came up with some super excuses when writing their own letters as to why they were going to be late for school! Year 2 have also been reading repetitive poems, and following this style of poetry to write their own poems. The children adored writing their own poem based on Kit Wright's 'Magic Box' and they also wrote their own version of 'If I had Wings' by Pie Corbett.



Our History topics for this term have been all about the significance of 'Remembrance Day' and continuing to learn about what life was like for a Victorian child. Year 2 visited the war memorial in Shaw and I was so proud of the children for the respect they showed whilst we were there. As part of our Victorian topic, the children were transported back to a Victorian classroom and they

used slate boards to practise their handwriting. The children decided they definitely preferred a modern-day classroom and they were outraged by what life was like in a Victorian classroom.



Our Art topic this term has been inspired by the work of Helen Bradley, who was a local artist from Lees, and she included many mill scenes from the 1900's in her paintings. The children have been looking closely at her paintings and learning about 'perspective'. They started off by painting a background, drawing mills and houses in the mid-ground and drawing 'Miss Carter' in the foreground. The children have created their own 'industrial landscape' inspired by Helen Bradley as their final piece of work using paints, pastels and colouring pencils.



Well done Year 2 for all of your hard work this half term. Have a lovely Christmas break!

**Year 3:** Year 3's **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 prehistoric events on a timeline and used artefacts to make deductions about life in the past. They have learnt about early Stone Age hunter-gatherers and the importance of flint for making tools and weapons. They have used a range of information sources to understand what life was like in the Neolithic farming village of Skara Brae in the Orkneys. They have investigated how Stonehenge was built and debated its possible uses and they have looked at how inventions in the Bronze Age and the Iron Age changed daily life, comparing homes, tools, weapons, pottery, jewellery and art.



In **Art**, linked to the History topic, the children have developed their painting skills, mixing colours and using a range of implements and techniques to produce some excellent Stone Age cave paintings.

The **English** work this term has centred on using dialogue. The children worked extremely hard to use the conventions of speech punctuation to write their own entertaining versions of Beware of Boys by Tony Blundell. In addition, the children have read and performed a range of playscripts, and they are enjoying writing their own playscript based on a familiar nursery rhyme.

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 learnt how to use efficient strategies to add and subtract mentally. 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 used coins and notes to calculate amounts of money and they have solved money problems using addition and subtraction. They have measured lines and objects, using centimetres and millimetres and estimated and measured capacity using litres and millilitres.

In the **Science** topic, 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 continued to work enthusiastically in **French** lessons, learning how to hold a short conversation in French. They have learnt some colours and numbers and enjoyed listening to, and joining in with, some French songs.

On 28<sup>th</sup> November, as part of their **RE** topic about Jewish Festivals and Family Life, the children had a very enjoyable afternoon visiting the Manchester Jewish Museum for their workshop: Holidays and Challah. In addition to visiting the synagogue and the museum itself, the children had lots of fun kneading, plaiting and baking their own Challah bread, as well as learning about, and tasting, some of the foods associated with Jewish festivals. The children were extremely well-behaved and took part in all the activities with interest and enthusiasm. Well done, Year 3!



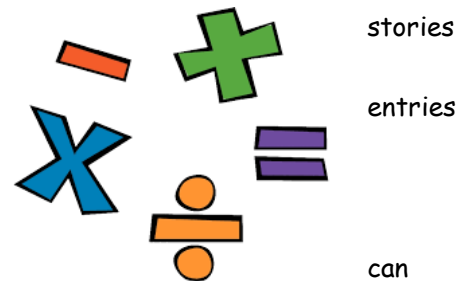


**Year 4:** We have had a fantastic first term in Year 4 - well done for all your hard work everyone!

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

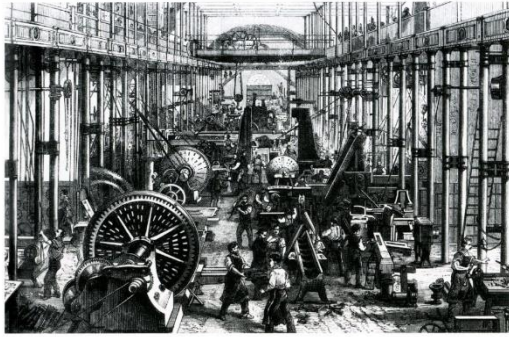


In English, we have been exploring based in historical settings, and have written excellent, if rather sad, diary based on Hetty Feather by Jacqueline Wilson. We have also been writing information texts all about our own imaginary creatures, looking at how we use subheadings to structure our non-fiction 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 ships, canals and railways transport goods from across the world to Manchester to be used in factories. The have looked at the darker side of the Industrial Revolution by considering how the slave trade linked to the cotton industry.



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Much of this half term has been occupied by our first Design and Technology topic: designing and creating our 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. We have also been working hard on our drawing topic in art, inspired by L.S Lowry.

Outdoor P.E has been centred around learning some of the skills to play football, including dribbling, passing, defending and attacking. In indoor P.E, we have continued our work on gymnastics and explored jumps, rolls and balances before creating our own routines.

In R.E, we have continued to learn about Hinduism. We have looked in more depth at the beliefs held by Hindus and explored some significant rituals and festivals, including Diwali.

In computing, the children have been challenged to use and interpret spreadsheets in various ways, including budgeting for their own party! They did a brilliant job!

In the run up to Christmas, the children had a fantastic time attending the pantomime of Aladdin at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. The children were well behaved and sang along to every word! 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:



In our geography topic, we have been learning all about volcanoes and earthquakes. We have discovered what volcanoes are, what causes them and what the consequences are. The children have learnt many interesting facts about volcanoes and earthquakes throughout this topic and have really enjoyed it. We obviously loved building our own volcanoes the most, and witnessed some exciting eruptions using

bicarbonate of soda and white vinegar to cause a chemical reaction.

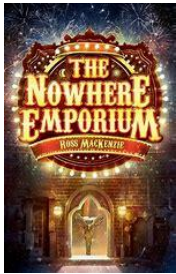
In DT, they have learnt about seasonality, and where and how a variety of ingredients are grown, reared, caught and processed. They learnt how to prepare and cook potato cakes in their food sessions and most enjoyed their finished products. All children took part in their cooking session sensibly to create their potato cake design.



In PSHE, they have been learning about how money is used in the wider world. They have discussed financial risk, the value of products, ethical spending and budgeting.

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.

In PE, they have completed Gymnastics sessions on Monday afternoon and have learnt how to play Tag-rugby on Wednesdays. Everyone participation well and gave the competitions their best go.



We have used 3D modelling on Purple Mash to create a range of different objects. We designed, decorated and created houses, vehicles and Christmas items.

We have continued to read our class book 'The Nowhere Emporium'. It has been lovely to hear everyone read aloud to the class and become enthralled with the characters and plot.

Finally, we been very crafty creating their Christmas cards and calendars. Everyone used their water colour painting skills to create night sky background and wintery trees. We have enjoyed making them and really hope you like them.

**Year 6:** Year 6 children have been focusing on geography this half term. They have identified the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle and the Prime/Greenwich Meridian

PE has focused on developing gymnastic skills and developing teamwork in outdoor and adventurous activities including orienteering which is linked to geography and map reading etc.

In Computing, children have been learning about how to use spreadsheets. This has included using formulae for calculations involving scores, prices and area and perimeter.

In Science, Year 6 children have investigated light and how we see. They have constructed a light tunnel to investigate how materials reflect light and how light travels in rays.

Our RE topic has focused on why Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the difference



between sacred and  
wreath and candles.

secular and the significance of the advent

The children have worked on a variety of painting techniques and have created beautiful Christmas cards on the theme of O Little Town of Bethlehem.



## GOVERNORS:

During the meeting the Governors:

- Received a report outlining what we have been doing in school; including reports from individual committees (Premises, Curriculum and Finance)
- Reviewed the School Development Plan
- Adopted the following policies: Safeguarding
- Agreed the school holiday pattern for 2025/2026
- Discussed the recent Ofsted report.
- Received a report from the Chair

- Received reports from Governors who had visited the school to discuss Early Years, Maths., Art, SEND, EMHW and Science.
- Reviewed the Pupil Premium and Sports Premium Reports.
- Reported on the fire drill and lockdown drill ring the meeting the Governors.

**CHRISTMAS:** The children all enjoyed wearing their Christmas jumper last Tuesday and enjoyed their Christmas dinner.

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

Last week the whole school went to watch Aladdin at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Thank you to the Friends of Buckstones who paid for the tickets.

### **FRIENDS OF BUCKSTONES:**

The Friends of Buckstones have done an amazing job this half term arranging the Christmas card designs, the name the elf raffle, the Christmas raffle with so many amazing prizes and the Christmas Fair.

The raffle was drawn in assembly and there were lots of very happy prize winners.



The elf has been won.

The first three prizes were:

1. An Apple watch
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 £2,000. The money raised by the Friends of Buckstones pays for the tickets to watch the panto. We are also hoping it may buy some new books for our library in the new year.

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

### **SCHOOL STREET**

We are continuing with our School Street in the new year. It has been a success thanks to you as parents cooperating and parking your cars further away or walking to school. The children in school have commented how much safer they feel walking into school, which is wonderful to hear. Please continue to support us and leave Delamere Avenue car free. To support this scheme we have also

installed a new cycle shed, if you would like your child to come to school on their scooter or bike please ask at the Office for a cycle lock.

## HAND HYGIENE

As we go into winter, common illnesses can keep children away from their classmates and studies. One of the best things we can all do to avoid illness is to practice good hand hygiene. Good hand hygiene helps stop infections from spreading, which means less disrupted learning time. Teach your child to wash hands properly for 20 seconds and stay away from others when sick. The e-bug resources for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits - and why they are important - to your child. To avoid catching bugs or passing it on to others wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water. This is most important following an episode of diarrhoea or vomiting, after using the toilet, before eating or preparing food, after changing nappies, as well as cleaning up vomit or diarrhoea. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers are not effective against some infections. Anyone who has diarrhoea and/or vomiting should stay at home. Do not return to work or send children to school until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped and do not visit your GP or hospital while symptomatic. If you are concerned about your symptoms, talk to your GP by phone, contact NHS 111 or visit the NHS web pages.

## EARLY HELP DROP IN

A purple-themed poster for an 'Early Help Drop-In' event. The background features a faint image of a town hall. The text is in white and pink. At the bottom, there is an illustration of four diverse people (two men and two women) smiling. Several logos are at the bottom: 'great places HOUSING GROUP', 'ROCA RESPECT OUR COMMUNITY AWARDS', 'firstchoice HOMES COUNCIL', and 'POSITIVE STEPS SUPPORT | CHALLENGE | CHANGE'.

**EARLY HELP  
DROP-IN**

We support families and individuals with issues surrounding **Housing, Finances, Mental Well-being, Physical Health, Parenting and Employment**

**WEDNESDAYS 09:30AM - 12:30PM**  
**ROYTON TOWN HALL**  
Rochdale Rd, Royton, Oldham OL2 6QG

great places  
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POSITIVE STEPS  
SUPPORT | CHALLENGE | CHANGE



**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS:**

**We break up on Friday 20th. December and return on Monday 6<sup>th</sup>. January 2025.**

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sarah Healey