



News Bulletin

February 2023



HEADTEACHER UPDATE

As the half term holiday quickly approaches, I would like to thank you all again for your support. Our children have enjoyed their new learning experiences and we are looking forward to another busy half term leading up to the Easter holiday.

Parent/Carer consultations are underway and we look forward to sharing your child's learning with you – we have many things to celebrate! The class teacher will be sharing your child's books, mid-year report and attendance certificate. Please ensure that you have your appointment prior to the holiday.

I am delighted that we have secured funding from the Community Chest project and must thank Councillor Trueman for supporting our bid for improvements to our Early Years outdoor area. We hope that our new outdoor equipment and furniture will enhance the provision for our younger children.

We look forward to our annual Easter egg decorating competition and Nursery/Reception Easter Bonnet Parade. The theme for this year's decorate an egg competition for children in years 1 to 6 is "Reading for Pleasure". Children can decorate an egg linked to their favourite book, character, nursery rhyme or traditional tale. I have no doubt that the children will produce some unique and fabulous creations! All entries to be brought into school on the morning of Tuesday 28th March. Our Nursery/Reception Easter Bonnet Parade will be held on Tuesday 28th March at 9.15am for parent/carers to join us and hear the children sing some Easter songs wearing a bonnet made at home. Further details to follow.

With very best wishes,

Julia Watkins

Baby News

Congratulations to Mrs McMeiken who gave birth to a healthy baby boy on Wednesday 8th February. Teddy James weighed 8lb 7oz. All the family are doing well and we look forward to her visiting school after February half term.

Attendance

Attendance to date from September 2022 is 94.5%. Since returning after Christmas the figures have increased to 95.1%. All children who have improved attendance at the end of Spring term will be rewarded with a Dominos pizza lunch. The school's target is 96% or above.

EARLY YEARS

The children have had a fun and busy Spring term 1. The children have enjoyed all activities linked to our theme Destination Outer Space. The children have enjoyed lots of creative activities such as rocket making, creating spaceships and alien head bands. We also got to celebrate Chinese New Year in which the children tried some Chinese food which was enjoyed by all.

Nursery

In maths we have been matching numerals to quantities, and have started to practise to write our numbers. In Literacy we have been recognising our name and beginning to write our name using our letter formation rhymes. Well done Nursery. We are so proud of you!



Reception

In Literacy we have been reading 'Aliens Love Underpants' by Claire Freedman. We have had great fun going on an 'underpants hunt' after the aliens had been to our classroom and made a right mess! The children then used adjectives to describe characters and they were starting to retell the story by remembering the beginning, middle and end.

In Maths we have been learning our number bonds to 5- we have been listening to a great song called 'Number bonds to 5' by Jack Hartmann. We have been ordering numbers and adding 2-digit numbers.

We have been super excited learning all about the Chinese Lunar New Year. We have looked at all of the animals and we learned that this year, it was the year of the Rabbit. We have been very creative making Chinese lion masks and performing a Lion dance. The children were great and had lots of fun.

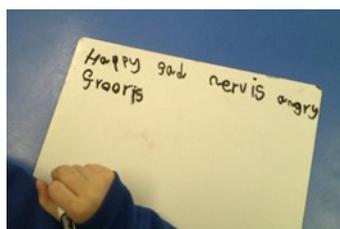


KEY STAGE 1 - YEAR 1

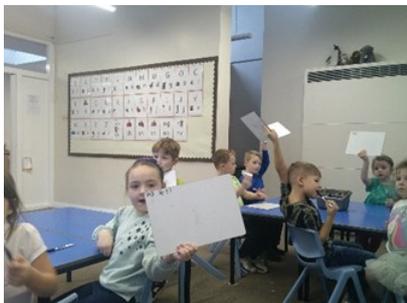
In P.E this term, we have been learning about how exercise makes us feel. Some of the activities we have completed are assault courses, balancing on one leg and seeing how far we can jump. After completing each activity, we discussed how each part of the body feels and why. We have also learnt about the lungs and what they do when we are exercising



It has also been mental health week. We talked about what mental health is and worked in pairs to write down as many different feelings as we could think of. We spoke about how these feelings can be good or bad and how it is normal to feel like this. Miss Richardson asked us what activities we like to do to make us happy or cheer us up. We then each created a drawing of this whilst listening to relaxing music. Once we drew our pictures, we created a paper chain and discussed how the chain is connected just like we are to our family and friends who make us happy.



On Friday 3rd February it was NSPCC day. To support this, we wore green and had a number day, where we completed number challenges in maths. In these challenges, we had to use our counting skills to help a rabbit cross the river and match the correct numicon to this. We also solved difficult word problems using addition. We had lots of fun!



KEY STAGE 1 - YEAR 2

Art - Super Sculptures

As part of our unit on sculpture, we were tasked with sculpting each other in a pose! We had to consider the body parts and how these would mirror our posing peer! Good job Year 2, they look great!



Safer Internet Day- Want to talk about it?

To celebrate and take part in Safer Internet Day this year, Year 2 joined the BBC Live lesson. We shared our biggest worries online, created advice for gaming online and developed our own safety character. We talked about the importance of feeling safe online and talking to trusted adults when we don't.



In R.E, children have been finding out more about the Islamic religion. In this lesson, they enjoyed learning about prayer mats and how these are used and finding out about their holy book, the Quran. Children enjoyed exploring these items.



P.E - Gymnastics: Up, Over, Under, Through!

In this lesson, we discussed different movements and went through the safety elements. We all enjoyed taking some new risks and experiments with the gymnastic equipment.



LOWER KEY STAGE 2 - YEAR 3

We have all been enjoying looking at the environment and thinking how we can improve it in art. We began by sketching a local landmark...The Angel of the North and we talked about how it improved the skyline. We then decided we were going to make our own sculptures for the garden on Key Stage 2 yard. We spent some time outside and sketched what we could see around us and colours. Keep checking our class page for our end sculpture design.



We have been learning about the celebration of Chinese New Year. We read the story of the zodiac and how it was created by a race between the animals. Then we learnt about customs and tradition. We then created our own Chinese dragon to ward off the evil spirits!



We have been celebrating Number Day with the NSPCC. We all came in dressed in green. We then spent the morning taking part in a range of different activities. We enjoyed activities that tested our times table knowledge, using our mental maths, learnt to read coordinates and took some time out for mindful colouring with times tables.



Children's Mental Health and Safer Internet Day

Year 3 have been taking part of lots of different activities in February. On the 7th of February we all enjoyed celebrating Safer Internet Day. We read the story Hanni and the Magic Window. This taught us what to do if we see something inappropriate online.

For Children's Mental Health Week, the theme is Being Connected. We have been learning about positive and negative self esteem. We thought about what people say and how it can affect us. We then talked about how if we are not connected to somebody we can feel lonely and sad. We thought about who we are connected to in school, We then sprinkled some secret kindness to all of the staff around school. We created cards with positive messages and a little sweet treat to brighten up their day.



LOWER KEY STAGE 2 - YEAR 4

Year 4 have been very busy this month! On February 3rd we celebrated Number Day with the NSPCC. Year 4 had a fantastic morning working in small groups to complete a range of challenges linked to multiplication and division. We had to think logically, find multiple solutions and put our times table knowledge to the test! Some of us used practical resources to help us find a solution and others drew out the problem visually on whiteboards. We had a lot of fun! In addition to this, we took part in the national Timestable Rockstar challenge to compete for the highest average of correct answers.



The following week, Year 4 also enjoyed celebrating Safer Internet Day and Children's Mental Health Week with Place2Be.

With the theme for Safer Internet Day being 'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online', we participated in different activities which provided opportunities for discussion about how the children spend their time online and what experiences they've had. As a class we created 'The Alpha-net' (an alphabet of anything related to life online); we ranked different online issues from those which posed the lowest risk to children our age to the highest risk and we had a 'snowball fight' where we threw questions we had around the classroom which our peers then answered.



For Children's Mental Health Week, Year 4 had lots of fun exploring the theme 'Let's Connect'. We considered who we would connect with on a day-to-day basis and the impact these connections had on ourselves as well as others. Then we learnt more about one another by playing games such as Bingo and Guess Who? Towards the end of the week, we also worked together with Year 3 to attempt the 'Jerusalema Challenge'. It was a lot of fun trying to help each other learn the steps and complete the dance.



UPPER KEY STAGE 2 - YEAR 5

To celebrate Chinese New Year, Year 5 enjoyed learning all about The Year of The Rabbit and found out why it was significant. We looked at what it means and the different traditions linked to Chinese New Year. We also spent some time food tasting different Chinese foods. This included noodles, egg fried rice, prawn crackers and vegetable spring rolls. We enjoyed tasting the different foods and some of us discovered some new foods that we now enjoy.



Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed their trip to The Beacon of Light in Sunderland. We enjoyed a range of different activities which allowed us to develop our understanding of Sunderland heritage and the history of coal mining. We were fortunate enough to take part in a sports session with expert coaches where we developed our team skills followed by a session looking at Sunderland football clubs' badge and the history of the badge. We completed a code breaker activity and began designing our own badge for something personal to us. We even got to try on some retro and newer style Sunderland football tops.



In the afternoon we enjoyed a range of activities linked to mining history and were given a talk by some real-life miners. They showed us some of the equipment which would be used during mining and even taught us some songs such as 'Just One Spark'. Our singing voices were excellent! After this we began looking around the grounds of Sunderland's football ground. We explored the different statues and discovered the reasoning behind them and why they were important. It was enjoyable trying to answer different questions about each statue and finding out the new information.



UPPER KEY STAGE 2 - YEAR 6

What a busy few weeks we have had in Year 6! We celebrated Children's Mental Health Week as well as World Number Day and Safer Internet Day!

This year's theme for Children's Mental Health Week was 'Let's Connect'. We discussed what a connection was, good connections, bad connections and who we had connected with so far that day. We also talked about different ways of connecting and how on a weekend or evening we may connect more using technology. As part of our lesson we learned how to build good strong connections with people and created these fantastic wordles about connecting with others.



In Music, we have begun to learn the ukulele. We first looked at the different parts of the ukulele and labelled them. Next we learned how to hold a ukulele and do a basic strum. Finally, for this lesson, we learned the chord C. We learned where to hold down the A string on the 3rd fret and practised playing a song with chord C. It was a lot of fun.



On Friday February 3rd, it was NSPCC National Number Day. We had great fun working through mathematical number investigations. We explored finding decimal equivalents of fractions through division and also completing inverse calculations through Roman Numerals. Well done Year 6!



Using the theme of animals within our art lesson, we carefully devised a plan for our clay pots. We thought carefully about the use and audience of our product. We were able to apply our sketching skills to produce some excellent designs. When our designs were finished, we used plasticine to practise and refine our techniques for creating our pots. We carefully used a range of tools to build a plasticine pot which included plaits, coils, swirls and patterned design. We look forward to showing you our final product!



School Council Spring 2023



As part of our NSPCC Number Day 2023 and raising £142 for this worthy charity, Blackfell competed in the national Times Tables Rockstarz event. We had an hour through out the day to correctly answer as many multiplication questions as we could resulting in points for our class. Many children completed their final time at home afterwards. A big well done to our class winners, Year 4 who will be rewarded with an additional 15 minutes break time. A special mention to our individual winner, Carter. He was presented with a certificate for his excellent effort.



Groundworks will be visiting the School Council on Friday 3rd March to support school in a recycling programme. We will keep you updated of any initiatives and developments in March's newsletter.

Sporting News



The Washington District League season will resume on 2nd March. Games will be played at various schools around Washington. Players from Year 5 and Year 6 represent our school. Good luck to everyone who will be taking part over the coming weeks.