

NEWSLETTER

for Blackwell First School - Blue Class



Welcome back after the half term break and what a good first half term we have had in Blue Class. The children have settled in happily and quickly, are working hard and are stepping up to the higher Year 4 expectations. Our Victorian topic was a hit at the start of the year and I know many children were keen to revisit the classic Dicken's story of Oliver Twist at home with you. I could tell it was a very popular story choice as a day didn't go by without someone asking me whether we were going to read any more of the story! Our trip to Blists Hill made their learning come alive and was a super day out for all. The children showed high levels of engagement and asked great questions. Our more recent topic, Planet Earth, inspired many children and I know they particularly enjoyed making their rainforest board game. As well as lots of hard work in the classroom, it has been great to see a number of children developing other skills by taking part in after school clubs, play leader training and music lessons. All of that in only one half term... and there's plenty more exciting learning opportunities in this half term too!

TOPIC

During the first week back, we have planned a special one-week topic, 'Remembrance', to mark the 100 years since the end of WW1 and to help the children develop an understanding of the significance of this event.



Afterwards, 'Special Places Around the World' will be our new topic and Africa will be the continent of study with a specific focus on Tanzania. The children will develop their Geography and R.E. skills during this topic. The children will be planning and preparing an 'Our World Celebration Day' in school and will spend a day sharing their learning with the rest of the school. This project will develop the children's planning, creativity and communication skills.

In Geography, the children will develop their understanding of the world, naming and finding the location of continents and oceans, various countries in Africa and significant landmarks in and around Tanzania and will become more aware of time zones and climates. They will develop their investigation skills and make comparisons between Blackwell and Mtwara, a village in Tanzania. They will explore the importance of water in Tanzania and its effect on the landscape and its people.

Through R.E., the children will investigate and compare different religions followed in Africa. They will explore religious buildings and acts of worship and investigate the lives of some significant religious people.

PSHE, Music, Computing, French, P.E and Philosophy for Children are taught each week throughout the year. See our 'Curriculum' page on the school website for more information.

BITS AND PIECES

As part of teaching children about healthy lifestyles, we encourage all children and adults in school to eat a healthy snack during morning playtime such as fruit and avoid items such as biscuits and cake. Your child can bring in something from home or buy something from our [school tuck shop](#). Honey popcorn and fruit bags were last month's most popular purchases!

This half term, the children will learn about the importance of money and jobs during PSHE. At Blackwell, children are given the opportunity to take part in an optional Year 4 Job Scheme. This involves applying for a job and earning Blackwell pounds! Over the next few weeks, they may come home with some application forms and ask you for a reference! This scheme encourages responsibility and enterprise in the children and gives them a head start towards adulthood.

Please check that your child has a pair of thick socks in their P.E. bags so that their feet are nice and toasty at Forest School.

LITERACY

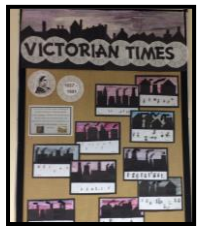
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters will be our stimulus in Literacy. Asking questions about the text, making predictions and analysing characters will develop their reading skills. The children will learn how to add more detail in their sentences with adverbs i.e. happily, nervously..., develop ways of starting sentences in interesting ways and consolidate their use of correctly punctuated dialogue. The children continually work towards their personal writing targets and it has been great to see many children achieving their first couple of targets already.

In phonics the children will be taught how to spell a range of vowel sounds such as 'or' in work, world, worse... and other spelling conventions such as the use of apostrophes for contraction. This half term, the words of focus will be: complete, consider, continue, decide, describe, difficult, different, disappear, early, earth, eight, eighth, enough, exercise, experience, experiment, extreme, famous, favourite, February, forward, fruit, grammar, group, guard, guide

Take a look back at last half term...



In the Victorian grocers



Victorian artwork

NUMERACY

During Numeracy, children will be consolidating and developing their use of mental and written calculations for multiplication and division, their understanding of fractions and the application of these skills when problem solving. Mental maths will focus on adding and subtracting any 2 2-digit numbers using a range of efficient methods, doubling and halving numbers to 100 fluently (even numbers only for halving) and counting on and back from zero in tenths and in steps of 25, 50, 100 and 1000. The 3 times table will be the focus for the next few weeks.



Sharing rainforest board games with friends

TIMES TABLES

Oh no you might say! We had to learn them and so do children of today! Learning times tables is a very important part of children's mathematical development. We help the children learn them at school in a variety of ways from old fashioned chanting to games such as bingo and Bing, Bong, Zong! However, to help the children **learn them by heart** we need you to help us too! Please encourage your child to practise their times tables at home. Like daily reading practice, **daily times table practice** makes a significant impact on their learning. We spent last half term revisiting our 2 and 5 times tables and over the next few weeks we are focusing on the 3 times table before we move onto the 4s. Thank you for your continued support. It makes such a difference.

If there is anything you wish to ask about, please come and speak to me at the end of the school day or if you just want to say hello! I am usually available to speak informally after 3.15p.m. Thank you.

Miss Townsend

