

# NEWSLETTER

## for Blackwell First School - Blue Class



Welcome back after the half term break and what a good first half term we have had. The children have settled happily and quickly into our Blue Class bubble where they are working hard, with great enthusiasm and are stepping up to the higher Year 4 expectations. Our first two topics, 'Through the Ages' and 'Into the Woods' provided an inspirational start to the year. Making board games, going on an autumnal woodland walk, spending a day with the artist in resident, Mark Riley, a sponsored mile and solving a Bronze Age hoard dilemma were just a few of the highlights. All of that in only one half term and there are plenty more exciting learning opportunities in this half term too!

### TOPIC

'Tell Me A Story' is our new topic. The story we will be focusing on is the children's classic, 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' by C.S. Lewis. Art, Geography and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. PSHE, Music, Computing, French, P.E. and Philosophy for Children will be taught each week too. See our 'Curriculum' page on the school website for more information.



The project the children will be working towards is creating a scrap book of their learning to bring home to share with you. As we were unable to share the children's learning books with you during Parent Consultations, we thought this would be a motivational and rewarding project for the children and something that families can enjoy sharing together.

Through Art, children will create a Narnia inspired piece using a similar style as that used by Michael Brennan-Wood. They will use resist techniques and monoprinting to create unique fabrics as a basis for their artwork.

In Science, we will explore animals including humans and how their teeth give an insight into the types of food that they eat. Food chains will be used to show the relationships between different organisms and children will learn the science behind the digestive system.

Geography lessons will focus on global features seen on large scale maps. We will study cold places, like the setting in our story, and see how climate affects vegetation and in turn land use.

### 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. Fruit bread 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 lessons. 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! This scheme encourages responsibility and enterprise in the children and gives them a head start towards adulthood. We look forward to having our Job Vacancy board up and running before Christmas and application forms will then be sent home.

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.

Take a look back at last half term...



### LITERACY

What a great classic for our focus in Literacy – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The children will develop their reading skills by asking questions about the text, making predictions, discussing author intent and developing their inferring skills.

Being exposed to the rich language in the text will develop their speaking and writing skills. We will enjoy retelling the story and identify words and phrases that are memorable. The children will learn how to add more detail to their sentences with adverbs i.e. happily, nervously... and consolidate their use of subordinating conjunctions to extend sentences. 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 Spelling, 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. Please see the homework sheet for the tricky words of focus for this half term.

### NUMERACY

During Numeracy, children will be consolidating and developing their use of mental and written calculations for addition and subtraction and the application of these skills when problem solving.

Mental maths will focus on the 3, 4 and 8 times tables, recalling number bonds to 100 and 1,000 (multiples of 50 only for the latter), doubling and halving numbers to 100 fluently (even numbers only for halving) and counting on and back from zero in steps of 20, 25, 50, 100 and 1000.

### 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 and in Key Stage 2 we use these facts all the time in many areas of the maths curriculum. 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! The APP 'Squeebles' is also popular with the children. 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 has a significant impact on their learning. The aim is for them to be able to recall any of the taught times tables within 3-5 seconds. Thank you for your continued support. It makes such a difference.