



Mrs Marks illustrated the 'Rights of the Reader' by Daniel Pennac for us. Hetty and a BFS reader are enjoying time together to illustrate 'The Right to Skip.'

# NEWSLETTER for Blackwell First School

*...developing the whole child...*

March 2022

Dear Families,

## The Velveteen Rabbit

"You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

by Margery Williams

Quotes from children's books that are on display in our entrance area.

"IF YOU HAVE GOOD  
THOUGHTS THEY WILL  
SHINE OUT OF  
YOUR FACE LIKE  
SUNBEAMS AND YOU  
WILL ALWAYS LOOK  
LOVELY"  
- ROALD DAHL -

'People say we can't do anything about the way the world is; they say it's set in stone. I say it looks like stone but it's mostly paint and cardboard.' This quote by Katherine Rundell, children's author, gives us hope during the current crisis in Ukraine and the value of our own efforts. It also shows the value of reading. We often use quotes from stories to help us make sense of the world and for children, books are key to help the children understand their own lives and those of others.

As a First School, one of our primary aims is to develop children who can read fluently before they leave for Middle School and to do this we:

- Read to the children every day and help them develop a love of reading;
- Teach them phonics to help them start to read;
- Develop their vocabulary to support them understand the language that they read and
- Develop their comprehension of texts by talking to them about their reading.

Children in Red, Green and the start of Purple Classes take home books that match the taught phonics as well as having an ebook matched to their school book, whilst in the rest of the school, the children select books themselves from within a banded set of books aimed at their phonics as well as their fluency and comprehension.

It would be wonderful if you could hear your children read several times each week using their school books (particularly the ebooks for Red, Green and Purple Classes) but also share stories with them that you read to help to support their vocabulary development. We have included a list of suggestions for bedtime stories on the children's reading cards and 'A Guide to Book Chat' has been included with this letter.

Best wishes,  
Mrs Moss

### Family assemblies

31<sup>st</sup> March – 8.45am Blue Class  
1<sup>st</sup> April – 8.45am Green Class  
Please join us on the back playground for around 10 minutes to share some of the children's learning. We hope that you can come along.

### Science Week...

We are focusing on Science this week as part of British Science Week in Collective Worship, introducing Charles Darwin and Sarah Gilbert, and in lessons and clubs.

11-20 March  
British  
Science  
Week  
2022



Sharing the importance of Science to our everyday lives will help the children value their Science learning.

### End of term 'Art Exhibition'

Although COVID cases continue to rise again, we hope to invite you all to the Art Exhibition on April 7<sup>th</sup> at the following times (see the separate flyer):

Nursery and Reception – 8.45am  
Years 3 and 4 (Blue and Yellow Classes) – 9.45am  
Years 1 and 2 (Green and Purple Classes) – 10.30am  
You will have the opportunity to view artwork from all children and to purchase your own child's art and order copies for any other family members. Please bring cash along if you'd like to purchase your child's artwork.

Nursery will not take part in the Art Exhibition but will share a song or two with you. Please come along to the back playground for your time slot. We all look forward to seeing you.

### SCHOOL SPORT/ HEALTH AND THE ARTS

**BELLBOATING** – This will take place with the Year 4s during April.  
**SPORTING EVENTS** – Competitive, coaching and club events are planned as below now local events have been reintroduced: Red and Green Classes – TBC, Purple Class- Dance Festival, Yellow Class – Basketball coaching in school and Blue Class – High Five and Netball.

After School Club also have a Fun Fitness Club on Tuesdays.  
Mrs Edney runs Sports Clubs each afternoon and as you can see from letters home, we have three after school sports clubs running after Easter.

Arts – We look forward to welcoming you to our Art Exhibition.

### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This week our theme is *Thoughtfulness* and we have started the week by considering the work of Millicent Fawcett (suffragette) and the thoughtful nature of her work, caring for a cause (equality for women). We used the painting of her and her husband by Ford Madox Brown to show thoughtfulness. We considered why her statue in Parliament Square, erected in 2018, is the only one of a woman.



**SAFEGUARDING NEWS** In 2021, we had an external safeguarding review and whilst we had no major issues to address it was a useful exercise to consider all of our systems and procedures.

Several recommendations were made:

- Inform the children of the existence of Childline
- Inform parents of who to contact in the case of a child protection issue- this is Worcestershire Family Front Door **01905 822666**
- **Ensure parents update contact details/ changes to mobile numbers**
- Support Governors in awareness of GETSAFE
- Ensure new staff know what to do in the event of concerns if all Safeguarding leads are absent from school

The designated person for safeguarding in the school is Anna Moss and Helen Townsend and Fleur Webb are also trained leads.

Blackwell First School is an Operation Encompass school and receives police reports when there are incidents of Domestic Abuse. Operation Encompass is designed to support schools in helping children who have been present during reported cases of Domestic Abuse. It is important to know that a large number of children are present or in the same household during incidents of Domestic Abuse and that this has a significant impact on children's long term mental wellbeing. Please contact Anna Moss if you would like to speak about any of these issues.

### FINAL NEWS

\*Malvern residential for Year 4s- we are looking forward to our first full residential for three years. Many thanks to staff for taking the children in their own time.

\*Leavers' event – we will be planning a week of special activities for the Year 4s as well as a Leavers' DO so there's lots to look forward to.

\*We have an educational visit booked for June for Red- Blue Classes.

\*Remember 'Storynight' on 4<sup>th</sup> April 5.30-6.30pm- please pay via the PFTA link on the ParentApp.

It is COMIC RELIEF this week and the children will consider the work of this charity. **Please donate to the charity online or send in donations - <https://donation.comicrelief.com/>** Come to school wearing something red, from a bobble to socks or a jumper and bring a donation.

### Catchment review

We have been informed that there may be a catchment review in Bromsgrove, at the request of the Middle Schools. The BFS Governors have agreed that any review should be co-ordinated by Worcestershire County Council and have requested that parents should be consulted. We will keep you informed of any further details.

#### Mr; Barker's; Lemon & Courgette Muffins;- Make; 12

##### Ingredients

350g courgette raw, approximately 1-2 medium  
125ml vegetable oil  
2 free-range eggs  
100g granulated sugar  
1 lemon zest and juice  
300g plain flour  
1tsp baking powder  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1pinch salt



**For the lemon glaze-** 85g icing sugar/ 1tbsp lemon juice

##### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan. Line muffin tins with cases.
  2. Coarsely grate the unpeeled raw courgettes (in a box grater or food processor). Lightly squeeze the gratings in a clean tea towel.
  3. In a large bowl, whisk the oil, eggs, sugar, zest and juice together until smooth, then stir in the courgette. Sift in the flour, bicarb, baking powder and salt and gently combine.
  4. Spoon the batter into the prepared cases and bake for 25 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin completely.
  5. Mix the lemon juice and icing sugar together until smooth. Drizzle over the cooled muffins and sprinkle with lemon zest (optional).
- ✓ Suitable for freezing/Make it vegan: use flax eggs/ Make it wheat free: use rice flour

### Developing fluent mathematicians...please help us help the children!

As a school we value the continuing professional development of staff and, since September, the staff have received specific year group training from Anthony Reddy, Maths consultant, as well as focussed training on Times Tables to support maths in Years 2-4. With lots of practise, the children are becoming better and better at being 'number fluent.'

In the Early Years of school, it is vital that children develop number fluency by practising the following:

- Nursery and Reception – developing the understanding of numbers up to 5, then 10, then 20 without moving on too quickly. We need to help them 'play' with numbers through games to help them have instant recall by the end of Red Class of all number bonds within 10 (5+4/3+2/7-3 etc)
- Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) – instant recall of all number bonds within 20 and multiples to 100. Y2s also need to know times tables and be able to recall them all for 2, 5 and 10 up to 10x10.
- Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)- instant recall by the end of Year 4 of all times tables and their division facts to 12x12. (Y3- 3xs, 4xs, 8xs, 11xs and then Y4- 6xs, 7xs, 9xs, 12xs and repeat all others)

It would be so helpful if you could support the children with learning these number facts and talk about them with the children, explaining them. Expectations from the National Curriculum are high and the children need plenty of practise to help embed their learning.

Key vocabulary that children often confuse is helped by the song below, especially helpful for Key Stage 2 but we use the correct mathematical vocabulary with all year groups as the more they hear, the more they develop their understanding. (Key Stage 2 children will help you sing this one!)

**When you add two numbers it's the TOTAL and the SUM.  
DIFFERENCE is the answer in a SUBTRACTION.  
When you MULTIPLY numbers it's the PRODUCT that you find.**

**DIVIDE by your DIVISOR and the QUOTIENT 's left behind.**

Playing cards, board games, using maths practically for cake making, telling the time and buying things in the shops are all really helpful ways to support the children. Miss Townsend and I can really tell which children are practising their times tables at home so thank you for helping the children become more fluent.