

# 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 Blue Class where they are working hard, with great enthusiasm and are stepping up to the higher Year 4 expectations. Our first two topics, 'Romans' and 'Nature' provided an inspirational start to the year. Visiting Chedworth Roman Villa, staring in yet another YouTube film, making story sacks for our Yellow Class friends, going on an autumnal woodland walk, scarecrow making and a sponsored mile 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

'Welcome to the World of Roald Dahl' is our new topic with 'Matilda' being the story of focus. The project the children will be working towards and having ownership of, giving their learning a purpose and making it more meaningful, is planning and taking part in a whole school 'Wonderful Words – a Celebration of Books' event on **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**. Problem solving is the skill focus that the children will further develop during this project, alongside other key competencies such as resilience and co-operation. The children will be invited to dress up as a Roald Dahl character or another character of preference on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. It would be great for the children to be involved in planning and selecting their costumes using clothes they may already have at home and perhaps making some props or alterations. For example, if they wanted to come as Matilda, finding a simple dress they may have in their wardrobe, wearing an Alice band and carrying a bundle of books would be simple yet perfect.



Art and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. Through Art, children will create an 'Enormous Crocodile' inspired piece using a similar style as that used by British artist, Michael Brennand-Wood. His style is bold and uses textiles and mixed media to create abstract art. Children will build on previous learning to explore two fabric resist techniques which will be used to create unique fabrics as a basis for their artwork. They will review their own artwork and adapt their own artwork throughout the sequence of learning.

In Science, we will explore animals including humans and how their teeth give an insight into the types of food that they eat – how will Matilda's teeth compare to those of Fantastic Mr Fox or the BFG? Food chains will be used to show the relationships between different organisms and children will learn the science behind the digestive system.

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.

### 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, cheesy scones 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.

### LITERACY

The children will be reading Matilda and watching extracts from the film to develop their reading and writing skills. The children will develop their reading skills by asking questions about the text, summarising what they read, discussing author intent and developing their inference skills.

Exposing children to the rich language in the text will develop both their speaking and writing skills. They will write character descriptions of the infamous Miss Trunchbull and write persuasive letters to Mr and Mrs Wormwood. We will enjoy retelling the story and will 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 learn how to spell words ending in -sure, homophones such as piece and peace and other spelling conventions such as the use of apostrophes for possession. 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 and 11 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 rounding any 4-digit number to the nearest 10, 100 and 1,000.

### 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** makes 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.

Take a look back at last half term...



Careful sketching of landscapes in Art



Exploring 4-digit numbers



Using pneumatics to make a moving figure



Enjoying learning at Chedworth Roman Villa



Our Roman learning on display in the classroom

If there is anything you wish to ask about, please come and speak to us at the end of the school day or send an email to [office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk). Many thanks. Miss Townsend and Miss Kuriger with Miss Burgess and Miss Bailey