

# NEWSLETTER

## for Blackwell First School- Blue Class



**Welcome back and a Happy New Year!** I hope you all had a good Christmas holiday and are well rested and ready and raring to go for the new term. 2019 ended in style, which I am sure you'd agree, with the children's excellent performance of 'The Fir Tree' where they performed with such confidence and led by example. The children have had a very successful first term and are familiar with routines and expectations and are now ready to be challenged further to develop their academic skills, independence and skills for life. We've already had an exciting first few days back exploring Scotland, creating paintings of some of the beautiful landscapes and solving a dilemma based on where to build a wind farm. We had a wonderful time at the theatre on Thursday an opportunity planned to inspire the children about the arts and literary world. Once again, the children were a credit to yourselves and the school with their impeccable behaviour and respect towards to all those in and around the theatre.

### TOPIC

'Off to Scotland' is our topic, with a project of the children planning and performing a class assembly to you all on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January**. Developing their communication skills will be one of the main key values we will focus on during this project at peer, adult and performing levels.

Geography, Art and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. In Geography, they will explore different maps to help ask and answer geographical questions about Scotland. The fictional story of Katie Morag will support their learning of physical and human features on the Isle of Coll and they will investigate how humans can both damage and improve the environment.

Through Art, the children will develop their drawing and painting skills. They will use line and colour to create landscapes of Scotland. John Brunson will be the artist of focus and we hope to be able to share the children's artistic creations with you during our assembly.

Electricity is our focus in Science where the children will ask questions, investigate and draw conclusions about circuits. They will learn about the uses and benefits of electricity, investigate circuit construction, conductors, insulators and switches. We will focus on Greta Thunberg's work on climate change and investigate how we can make changes with the creation and use of electricity to support our future lives and beyond.

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.

### JOB SCHEME

Over the Christmas holidays, some children chose to complete application forms for a Year 4 job where, if successful, they will gain employment and earn Blackwell pounds. Over the next few weeks, the children will be trained in their job and soon we will have fresh bread (made by our bakers) for sale in our tuck shop, sparkly windows (thanks to our window cleaners) and many other keen entrepreneurs busy at it! Your child will need a purse or wallet in school to keep their well-earned money safe.

### THANK YOU

Thank you for all of your support with the huge amount of reading your child is doing at home and for their times table practice. It makes a significant difference to their learning and rate of progress. It's the **8 times table** over the next few weeks.

**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**

### LITERACY

Peter Pan is the main text we will be using to support our reading and writing skills. When reading, they will be given opportunities to discuss words and phrases that the author uses to capture the reader's interest and imagination and to create suspense. Their reading will then support their writing skills where they will experiment with their own words and phrases to grab the reader's interest. We will also develop their sentence writing skills further by using conjunctions to extend and structure sentences in different ways. E.g. *He crept out of the room when no one was looking. When no one was looking, he crept out of the room.*

In phonics, the children will be taught how to use a range of prefixes such as un-, dis-, re-... and how they change the meaning of root words and other spelling patterns such as 'ou' in words such as double, country....

This half term, the words of focus will be: *famous, favourite, February, forward(s), fruit, grammar, group, guard, guide, heard, heart, height, history, imagine, increase, important, interest, island, knowledge, learn, length, library*. It would be great if the children could practise these tricky words at home too.



Take a look back at last half term...



Planning and carrying out a science experiment to learn about habitats



Using concrete apparatus to help understand column addition



Tucking into our delicious Christmas dinner



Wake 'n' Shake competition time



Panto fun!



And now we're off to Scotland!

### NUMERACY

During Numeracy, the children will continue to develop their understanding of subtraction. They will use concrete and pictorial representations to subtract 4-digit numbers before moving on to abstract column subtraction. Alongside this, they will also recognise the importance of finding the difference if the two numbers are close together and not to rely on column subtraction if this is not the most efficient method. Following this, problem solving will be the focus where the children will be introduced to the concept of bar modelling - a successful approach designed in Singapore to support the children's understanding and ability to solve word problems, something that nationally and globally is a challenge for many children.

Mental maths will focus on the 8 times table, doubles and halves to 100 and 5000 (multiples of 100), counting on and back through zero (including negative numbers), recognising multiples and adding and subtracting any 2 2-digit numbers using efficient methods (ask your child to tell you about RAPA CODA NUMBO!).