



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.'

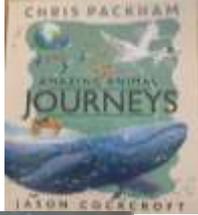
# NEWSLETTER

## for Blackwell First School

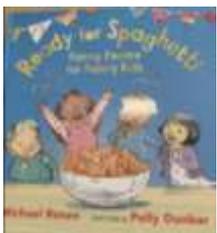
...developing the whole child...

March 2023

Dear Families,



As a staff team we are further refining our English curriculum this year, including our text progression (the books used to teach English from Nursery to Year 4). This ensures that the children learn from stories, non-fiction texts and poetry, engaging with a wide range of diverse authors, from classic to contemporary. Here are some super ones that you might like to borrow from the library or have at home.



### ***I opened a book***

By Julia Donaldson

*I opened a book and in I strode.*

*Now nobody can find me.*

*I've left my chair, my house, my road,*

*My town and my world behind me.*

This is the first verse of Julia Donaldson's poem and can be found in 'The Big Amazing poetry book'.

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. Our text progression in school includes books from a diverse range of authors, opening the children's eyes to the wider world.

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.

### **Science Week...**

We have focused on Science as part of British Science Week in Collective Worship, introducing Charles Darwin and Sarah Gilbert, and in lessons and clubs. We work to ensure that a diverse range of scientists are represented enabling all children to identify themselves as scientists. You may have noticed new posters on the back playground, funded by the PFTA celebrating 'Heroes', including Charles Darwin.



Our new playground sign



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

### **End of term 'Singing on the Steps'**

During the next two weeks the children will be learning songs and poems to sing and recite to you from the steps at the front of school as an end of term opportunity to visit the school and see the children perform.

Please come along to the front playground on:

23.3.23 8.45am Recorder concert children

28.3.23 8.45am Nursery and Red Classes

29.3.23 8.45am Green and Purple Classes

30.3.23 8.45am Yellow and Blue Classes

31.3.23 2.30pm Green and Purple pianists

Tea and Toast will be available for these occasions so please support school.

There will also be a Green Class Bake Sale on 30.3.23 after school.

### SCHOOL SPORT/ HEALTH AND THE ARTS

**BELLBOATING** – This will take place with the Year 4s during the Summer term.

**SPORTING EVENTS** – Competitive, coaching and club events are planned for the Summer term. Watch out for Parentapp messages. After School Club also have a Fun Fitness Club and our Football Club continues on Fridays. Mrs Hampton has been running Yoga each afternoon during enrichment clubs and Mrs Edney will be running sports clubs after Easter.

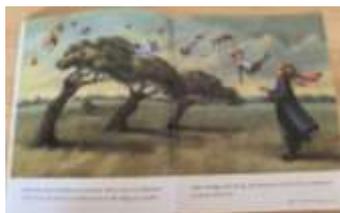
**Arts** – The children enjoyed creating their art for our Art Gallery in Reception and we look forward to exhibiting at Voices and Visions at Worcester Cathedral next term.



Yoga Club with Mrs Hampton

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP** This week our theme is **Safety** and we started the week by considering work of the United Nations and the 'Rights of the Child'.

We use the book 'For Every Child' to consider the rights that children have and to help them understand the responsibilities that sit alongside those rights. This is designed to support them in understanding their collective rights and responsibilities. We hope to develop children with lifelong community minded attitudes.



We work with the children on safety by explaining how school keeps them safe, how their families help to keep them safe and how they can keep themselves safe and learn to be responsible for their own safety. We share online safety advice and also share the Childline phone number to help them develop their own strategies for keeping safe.

### SAFEGUARDING NEWS

In 2022, 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:

- Remind 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; and provide 4 contacts (all of whom can drive)**

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 the residential. Many thanks to staff for taking the children in their own time. This could not happen without this considerable goodwill.
- \*Y4 Leavers' event – we will be planning a Leavers' DO so look out for further information. (25.7.23)
- \*We have an educational visit booked for June for Red- Blue Classes.
- \*Remember 'Storynight' on 28<sup>th</sup> March 5.30-6.30pm- please pay via the PFTA link on the ParentApp.

### Mr; Barker's Lemon & Courgette Muffins- Makes 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 Mental Maths 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.