

# NEWSLETTER

## for Blackwell First School- Blue Class



**Welcome back and a Happy New Year!** We hope you had a good Christmas holiday and are well rested and ready and raring to go for the new term. The children had a very successful first term, are familiar with routines and expectations and are now ready to be challenged even further to develop their academic skills, independence and skills for life. We enjoyed a thought-provoking day on Monday where the children explored the importance of theatres, the works and legacies of Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare and the idea of living in a world without books and stories. A dilemma was then presented to the children: Should children spend less time reading and more time doing other things? (this links with our new topic.) The children considered the positives and negatives for both and it provided them with the opportunity to consider different viewpoints alongside developing social, moral and cultural awareness, all of which underpin our school vision, key values and competencies. We have many engaging learning opportunities planned for the term, involving daily reading and writing activities, a range of foundation subject investigations and new knowledge and skills to learn, enjoy and rehearse supporting the development of lifelong learners. We look forward to sharing in the children's learning journey with you throughout the term.

### TOPIC

'Let's Perform!' is our new topic and the children will be planning their own learning and skills needed to create a short class performance to share with the rest of the school in a few weeks' time.



Art and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. In science we will be learning about electricity and its importance in a film studio. Children will identify appliances that use battery or mains power and will investigate circuits, conductors and insulators. There will be opportunities to investigate different components and to test hypotheses about materials.

Art focuses upon further developing collage skills. Children will use cutting and tearing to collage their own pieces in the style of Andy Warhol, Francis Bacon and Henri Matisse. They will learn more about how to create the appearance of movement in their artworks and how collage can be used as part of pop art.

Following this first topic, we will then enjoy a 'Beliefs' topic where the children will further develop their knowledge and understanding of R.E. Children will learn more about Hindu beliefs and what it means to be a Hindu in Britain. All learning will be supported by our visit to the Balaji temple.

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.

### LITERACY

The Willow Pattern Story will develop the children's reading, writing and communication skills during this topic. The children will develop their reading skills by asking questions about the text, predicting, 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 a diary entry from one of the main characters and write a letter home expressing characters' thoughts and feelings. The children will learn how to use a range of fronted adverbials and consolidate their use of subordinating conjunctions to extend sentences. The children's letter writing will be sent to Allan Drummond, the author of The Willow Pattern story, to give them a sense of purpose and to foster further writing motivation.

In Spelling, the children will learn to spell tricky 'gu' words such as guard, guitar and guest, words with 'ture' endings such as adventure, moisture, mixture and homophones such as scene/seen, male/mail and ball/bawl.

The tricky words for this half term are on the Blue Class homework sheet. It would be helpful if the children could practise these tricky words at home alongside any individual spelling lists sent home.

Take a look back at last half term...



enjoying our theatre trip to watch The Nutcracker



busy rehearsing their own fantastic version of The Nutcracker



tucking into our delicious Christmas dinner

### RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

If you were to ask your child 'What is Miss Townsend's most important life rule?', hopefully they will say 'being kind'. Developing respectful and responsible citizens is one of our school values and underpins our curriculum and Relationships and Behaviour policy. It is lovely to see the children developing these qualities which are evident as soon as they enter the classroom where many greet the adults with, "Good morning, how are you today?" Having additional responsibility throughout the school day is something they take great pride in but also approach with great seriousness! Seeing them support younger children with good listening in assembly, delivering messages around the school, saying thank you to the kitchen staff after lunch without being asked to are some of the lovely things we see throughout the school day which make us very proud of them. We look forward to seeing some children take on further responsibility through our Year 4 job scheme in the coming weeks.

### THANK YOU

Thank you so much for the support from home working on their targets in Reading, Writing and Maths. It is making a big difference to their confidence and progress. Please continue to work on the targets shared at last term's parent consultations alongside daily reading and times table practice.



### NUMERACY

During Numeracy, the children will continue to develop their use of mental and written calculation strategies for subtraction and the application of these skills when problem solving, including 2-step problems. They will also develop their geometry knowledge and skills by investigating symmetry, angles and different quadrilaterals (e.g. parallelograms and trapeziums), triangles (equilateral, isosceles and scalene) and their properties.

Mental maths will focus on the 8 times table, counting in 6s, 25s and 1,000s, using place value to calculate e.g.  $500 \times 3$ , doubles and halves to 5,000 of multiples of 100 and adding and subtracting any 2 2-digit numbers using efficient methods (ask your child to tell you about MC RAPA CODA NUMBO!).

Please help your child to recall their times tables fluently by encouraging them to practise for 5 minutes each day. Thank you.



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