

NEWSLETTER

for Blackwell First School – Green



Welcome back! We hope you had a lovely break and the children are ready for another busy half term. Last half term, we visited Singers Hill Synagogue where we learnt all about Jewish beliefs and practices. Thank you to Geoffrey for such an interesting tour of his beautiful synagogue. We have two exciting topics this half term – Exploring History and Easter. We have family events during both topics including our class assembly (19.3.26) and Easter Singing on the Steps (26.3.26).



English

We start our 'Exploring History' topic with an exciting new book from Mrs Moss, called 'The Garden'. We'll also be exploring books about The Great Fire of London and writing a report on what we find out. Throughout our learning, we'll be checking for capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamations marks, as well as extending our sentences with 'and' and reading our work back to check for sense.

Help at Home with Handwriting

Over the last couple of years, the Government has produced reports around strong foundations in early writing. These reports advise the importance of securing early handwriting skills, including correct pencil grip, posture and accurate letter formation, before moving on to more complex skills, such as joining letters. This year, as a school, we have decided to secure basic cursive letter formation in Reception and Year 1, before joining letters in Year 2. Therefore, in Year 1, we will focus on accurate letter formation with consistent letter shape and size e.g. ensuring ascenders (tall letters) and descenders (letters where the 'tail' falls below the line) are written correctly. Securing accuracy in the early years will ensure the children avoid bad habits, which are hard to break further along in school. Please see our homework box for guidance videos on letter formation and pencil grip.



Homework

Just a reminder that topic homework is optional. The activities are designed to help you see the type of learning taking place within the classroom. Having said that, the level and quality of topic homework has been fantastic and a real joy to mark. Reading, as always, remains an essential part of home learning. If you read multiple times a week it has a significant impact on progress. We'd also like to remind you about our handwriting videos to help with correct letter formation. Any help at home, to reaffirm good habits, is always helpful:

[Letter formation c o a d g q - YouTube](#)

[Letter formation b h k p - YouTube](#)

[Letter formation e f - YouTube](#)

[Letter formation i u y l t - YouTube](#)

[Letter formation r n m - YouTube](#)

[Letter formation v w s x z - YouTube](#)



Phonics and Reading

In Phonics, the children will continue to learn that sounds we already know can be made by different graphemes. Our work will help in preparation for the National Phonics Screening Check which will take place in June. All children will be assessed on their ability to sound talk and blend 40 words. It is vital for the children to practise the skill of accurate sound talking and blending at home and at school so they're ready for the screening check.

At the end of the week, we will send home the children's group reading book (after 3 reading sessions in school) and an unfamiliar decodable reading book. Please continue to send reading folders into school on Thursdays so that we can send home new books on Fridays.

Topic

During our 'Exploring History' topic, we will focus on DT, Art and History. In History, we will be learning about the Great Fire of London and the impact on the city. In DT, we will be learning that food comes from animals and plants and design and create a food product linked to our topic. In Art, we will focus on textiles, using our weaving, knotting and mark making skills to create a wall hanging linked to The Great Fire.

Athletics will be the focus for PE. We will learn how to move with good technique, learn the names of different athletics events and name some famous British athletes.



Maths

This half term, we will further develop the children's understanding of subtraction as counting back (when the minuend and subtrahend are far apart) and counting on (when the minuend and subtrahend are close together). We will use a range of concrete apparatus to support the children's understanding.

As well as measuring and calculating with money, we'll be finding out how to tell and show the time to the hour and half past the hour.

Each lesson will include problem solving and reasoning as well as a mental maths session to strengthen recall and fluency of counting and number facts.



Bits and Bobs

Forest School - Please wear joggers or leggings with your school top and something warm underneath. Please see Parent App for Forest School groups.

PE - Please name all items of PE kit so we can return stray items. Please pop socks into PE kits if your child wears tights and tie up long hair. We are going to be outside for our PE lessons now and with the weather being so unpredictable, please make sure children have shorts and joggers.

Library books - The children may change their library book any day of the week. Previous books must be returned for new books to be issued. If you don't have a library book at home, please let us know so we can send one home.

Thank you for your continuing support. If you wish to speak to us about anything, please contact the office by telephone or email office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk or catch us at the end of the day for an informal chat. We look forward to seeing you at parent consultations.

Best wishes, Mrs Webb, Mrs Hampton and Mrs Thompson.