

# NEWSLETTER

## for Blackwell First School- Blue Class



**Welcome back and a Happy New Year!** We hope you all 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 Wednesday when the children explored artwork based on 'The Circus' and were involved in solving a dilemma about the use of animals. Dilemma based learning provides the children with the opportunity to consider different viewpoints and engages the children in teamwork and problem solving alongside developing social and moral 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

'ROLL UP! ROLL UP! Blackwell's Brilliant Writing Competition' is the project for our new 'At the Circus' topic. Mrs Moss and the School Council have worked together to plan this project where all children across the school will have many opportunities to enter this competition with prizes galore! This project has been designed to motivate the children and inspire them to become creative writers following two years of Covid-19 hit learning where, nationally, writing was the curriculum area that was particularly challenging for children.



Art and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. In Art, children will learn how to use collage to create their own distorted images, straight from the hall of mirrors! We will use work from Andy Warhol, Francis Bacon, Henri Matisse and Olivia Pilling as inspiration and will explore how paper and other materials can be cut, torn and overlapped to create unique pieces of artwork. Our artwork will be used as part of certificates for the writing competition.

In Science lessons, children will take inspiration from famous scientists in the past, using their stories to learn more about what makes a good scientist. Then they will explore changes in states of matter, defining solids, liquids and gases and planning a fair test to explore changes of state. They will use their new knowledge to help understand how the water cycle works. New knowledge will be used in non-fiction writing for the competition.

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

As part of our school values we help our children develop into respectful and responsible citizens and aspirational individuals. Our Year 4 job scheme supports these values and it is lovely to share with you that all children, who wanted to take part, have been successful with one of their applications. We had a lovely time reading some of the fabulous references! Over the coming weeks, they will receive training and start earning Blackwell pounds and soon we will have fresh bread (made by our bakers) for sale in Lettuce Eat, 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

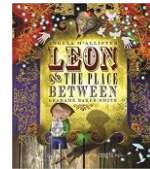
Thank you so much for the support from home working on their targets in Reading, Writing and Maths. It is making a big difference and is helping the children catch up on some of the missed learning as a result of national lockdowns over the last two years. Please continue to work on the targets from their reports alongside daily reading and times table practice.

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 & Miss Kuriger

### LITERACY

Leon and the Place Between by Grahame Baker-Smith is the text the children will enjoy as they develop their reading, speaking and writing skills further. When reading, they will be given opportunities to summarise, infer, retell and discuss words and phrases that the author uses to capture the reader's interest and imagination and to create excitement, curiosity and suspense. Their reading will then support their writing skills where they will experiment with their own words and phrases to capture the reader's interest when writing poems and short stories, both of which they can enter into the writing competition.



Learning how to correctly punctuate dialogue will be a focus alongside developing their sentence writing skills by using a range of adverbials such as time adverbials (suddenly), prepositions (inside) and adverbs (curiously).

In Spelling, the children will be learning how prefixes such as ir-, in-, -im and -il change the meaning of root words, spell words with the 'ay' sound spelt with ei, eigh and ey and explore more homophones.

Tricky words for this half term are on the Blue Class homework sheet. It would be great if the children could practise these tricky words at home too.

Take a look back at last half term...



sharing our Roald Dahl learning with our Yellow Class friends



using concrete apparatus to help understand column addition and subtraction



tucking into our delicious Christmas dinner



having lots of fun learning about the digestive system



becoming a Roald Dahl character in our Wonderful Words Day



Christmas Story Night

### NUMERACY

During Numeracy, the children will 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.

Following this, multiplication and division will be the focus where the children will be taught both mental and written methods for both operations. Problem solving continues to be part of every maths lesson and it has been lovely to see the children's progress in this challenging area of maths through the use of bar modelling.

Mental maths will focus on the 4 and 8 times tables, counting in 6s, 25s and 1,000s, using place value to calculate e.g.  $50 \times 3$ , doubles and halves to 5,000 of multiples of 100 and adding and subtracting any 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. See the reverse of this letter to learn more about the national multiplication tables check which will take place in the summer term.

## Multiplication tables check

### Do you have a child in year 4 at primary school?

If so, your child will be participating in the multiplication tables check in June.

The purpose of the check is to determine whether your child can fluently recall their times tables up to 12, which is essential for future success in mathematics. It will also help your child's school to identify if your child may need additional support.

### What is the Multiplication tables check?

It is an on-screen check consisting of 25 times table questions. Your child will be able to answer 3 practice questions before taking the actual check. They will then have 6 seconds to answer each question. On average, the check should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

### What if my child cannot access the check?

There are several access arrangements available for the check, these can be used to support pupils with specific needs. Your child's teacher will ensure that the access arrangements are appropriate for your child before they take the check in June.

The check has been designed so that it is inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). However, there may be some circumstances in which it will not be appropriate for a pupil to take the check, even when using suitable access arrangements. If you have any concerns about your child accessing the check, you should discuss this with your child's headteacher.

### Do I need to do anything to prepare my child for the check?

No, you do not need to do anything additional to prepare your child for the check. As part of usual practice, teachers may ask you to practise times tables with your child.

Schools will have unlimited access to a try it out area from March. They can use this to make sure pupils have the necessary support required to access the check. This includes opportunities for pupils to familiarise themselves with the check application and try out any access arrangements that may be required.

### How will the results be used?

Schools will have access to all their pupils' results, allowing those pupils who need additional support to be identified.

### Will I receive feedback on my child's check?

Yes. Your child's teacher will share your child's score with you, as they would with all national curriculum assessments. There is no pass mark for the check.



### Further information

Your child's teacher will be able to answer any questions about the multiplication tables check.

For further details you can also visit [www.gov.uk/STA](http://www.gov.uk/STA).

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Information for parents: 2022 multiplication tables check  
Electronic version product code: STA/22/8621/e ISBN: 978-1-78957-600-9

**OGI**

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