

NEWSLETTER

April 2022

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome back to the start of the Summer term – it is hard to believe another year has nearly passed. Last half term was a busy one as we continued to strive to give a full Horton Grange offer whilst managing on-going post pandemic challenges. Despite reduced restrictions, Spring 2 proved very challenging once again with a rise in cases. This now appears to have settled again and during the Summer term we intend to re-introduce whole school assemblies and mixed aged clubs. We were of course delighted to have parents in school again for parents evening; we know it is so much better to hear how your child is doing face to face and to get a chance to look at their progress in their books. Going into next academic year we hope this once again becomes the norm.



SHARING OUR LEARNING

Two Year Olds

Last half term, the two year olds were given lots of opportunities to extend their imaginary play in the small world area. They were encouraged to use resources purposefully and to take an interest in others' play.

The Two Year Olds also enjoyed accessing the large nursery outdoor area where they used the bikes. This was good for developing their gross motor skills and their spatial awareness.

There were also lots more cooking activities with yummy treats to take home!

The Two Year Olds had more opportunities to develop their pre-writing skills by taking part in fine motor activities, using tweezers to pick up pompoms and beads for threading.

In Two Year Olds there is always a focus around books and ensuring they are shared with the children as a group and on a one to one basis, this is fundamental in developing their language.



The children thoroughly enjoyed World Book Day reading *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. They went on their own bear hunt outside, exploring the swishy swashy grass and stumble tripped in the forest. They also explored shaving foam (snowstorm) and hid in our own cave just like the bear.

The Two Year Olds enjoyed lots of Easter activities too!

Lots of luck to three of our children who made the transition to nursery.

This term staff will be welcoming three new starters into two year olds and are looking forward to getting to know them.

The two year olds will be making the most of the finer weather with lots more outdoor opportunities. There are new sand resources and a new water tray for the children to explore.

There will be more weekly cooking/food activities to support making choices based on preferences and to encourage making links with home.

Mark making opportunities will also be prioritised to encourage pre-writing skills and to also assign meaning to their marks.

The lending library will continue each week and there will be a book to choose and keep for each child after every five posts on Tapestry to show them enjoying sharing their lending library books at home.

Children will also get to choose an activity bag to take home. These will differ each week and contain small activities to enjoy, there are some ideas of how to use these resources and some key vocabulary that goes with them. Again, it would be great to see the children using these at home so any photos of the children can be shared on Tapestry.

The following texts are used continuously in two year olds. They inform a lot of the planning with links across the whole EYFS, and most importantly, repeating these texts impacts hugely on language development.

Pip and Posy series (6 titles) - Axel Scheffler

The Tiger Who Came to Tea - Judith Kerr

Whatever Next - Jill Murphy

Peace at Last - Jill Murphy

The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle

Nursery

Last half term, the warmer weather awakened the inner gardeners in our Nursery as they began their topic, How Does Your Garden Grow? The children explored the basic needs of plants and put their findings to the test by planting an array of flowers and vegetables in the Nursery garden. It has been fantastic to hear how enthusiastically the children have been towards learning flower names and can confidently discuss what their favourite flower is and why. There have also been some beautiful artistic representations of the flowers, ranging from sketched observational drawings to detailed paintings. Using one of their topic books, Oliver's Vegetables, the children embarked on a taste test and sampled lots of delicious vegetables. All were surprised to hear just how popular cabbage was!

Now that Nursery have explored the garden surface, they will begin to explore what lies below as they start their new topic, Mini-beasts. They will be learning the names of familiar mini-beasts and seeing if they can be spotted in their surrounding outdoor environment by embarking on a mini-beast hunt. The children will discuss habitats and create their own fit for their favourite little critters!



Reception

Last half-term, Reception have been getting up early and putting on their wellies as they go Down On the Farm. As Spring provides welcome warmth, the children looked for signs of new life, both plant and animal and talked about the changes in the weather and the environment. They explored the life cycle of animals in greater depth and learn all the names for farm animals and their offspring.

In literacy the focus was storytelling and Reception learned how to tell stories in words, actions and through role-play, even making models of traditional tales in the block area. The author that was explored in greater depth was Mick Inkpen. The children loved reading about Kipper and his friends! The children also looked at instructions, both writing their own and following a set of instructions to make their own bread, delicious!



The children were very excited to receive a visit from the Story Bear who brought some exciting texts to enjoy and explore on World Book Day. Through these stories they learned about space, planet Earth and the different environments including the Antarctic. The children created some wonderful paintings, models and even their own books inspired by the stories.

The children continued to develop their knowledge of staying healthy, focusing on brushing teeth and maintaining healthy sleep routines. Reception also learned about their responsibilities to the wider world, such as not littering or wasting food.

This half-term, Reception will be putting down roots and spreading their leaves as they blossom into little gardeners with the topic; From Tiny Seeds to Plants with Leaves. Every child will get the chance to plant a seed and watch it grow. They will refresh their outdoor area by planting and getting the chance to watch their handiwork develop as the days lengthen and become warmer. The authors to be explored in greater depth are Sue Hendra and Oliver Jeffers. Reception will get the opportunity to develop their knowledge of baby animals when they visit Tweddle Farm and get a range of exciting hands-on experiences. The children will learn more about their responsibilities towards the world as they learn about recycling.

Reception's class text is Jack and the Beanstalk – traditional tale. They will use this book to learn about plants, how seeds grow and give a further insight into traditional tales and story structure.

Year 1

Last half term in Literacy, Year 1 enjoyed reading and retelling a range of stories. They explored London with Katie and the Lion in Katie in London (James Mayhew). They travelled on an imaginary journey to Africa to find out about Handa's Hen (Eileen Browne) –ask your children to tell you about all the animals that Handa and Akeyo spotted on their hunt to find Mondi. They then journeyed to the fantasy land of Cinderella's kingdom and enjoyed writing their own version of the fairy tale. The children have been working on using a range of conjunctions to join their ideas together (and, but, so), using capital letters for proper nouns and are continuing to use adjectives to describe.

In Maths, Year 1 have explored numbers up to 50. They have used a range of practical equipment to represent numbers and we have practised counting in 2s and 5s. Year 1 have also explored measurement, looking at height, length, mass and capacity. The children loved using practical equipment to compare different measurements using objects in the classroom.

In Science Year 1 have been exploring common garden and wild plants. The children enjoyed planting bulbs outside and going on a nature walk to see how many garden and wild plants they could spot.



In Geography they have been learning about the countries and capital cities that make up the United Kingdom. The children have read all about Katie's adventures in London – ask your child to tell you all about the landmarks which Katie visited.

In DT, Year 1 have been designing and making their own puppets. The children loved exploring a range of different puppets and used them to tell stories in class puppet shows. They thought about what they liked about them and what their own puppet needed to have for it to be successful. They then designed and made their own animal hand puppets. The children showed resilience when sewing their puppets together.



This half term in Literacy the children will read and retell the fable The Tortoise and the Hare and write instructions linked to their previous learning in Science and DT. In Maths, the children will be exploring multiplication, division and fractions. In Science, they will learn about the different parts of a plant and investigate what a plant needs to grow. Learning about how communication has changed over time will be the focus in History.

The children will be reading a variety of classic fiction books every day at 3 o'clock. Year 1 will be reading Alice in Wonderland, The Jungle Book, The Secret Garden and Peter Pan.



Year 2

Spring is certainly in the air and what a wonderful term it has been. Year 2 have continued to focus on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The children have practised spellings and number facts each day and the impact of this was evident in our most recent assessments. Well done to everyone who has practised at home.

Mid way through spring term Year 2 had a go at their first practise SATS papers. The children took everything in their stride and really did try their best. Thank you to everyone who attended our Year 2 SATS Parent Information Meetings.

In Literacy the children have read the text Man on the Moon by Simon Bartram. They have designed and described their own awesome aliens. They read a selection of postcards and then wrote their own postcard about a visit to the moon. The children really enjoyed writing postcards and had some fantastic ideas. The children have read, followed and written some instructions based on how to make a cup and ball game. They had a fantastic time and were thrilled when they could catch the silver ball. We know many of them challenged you at home and you did a great job!



In Maths, the children have worked hard to secure their knowledge of number bonds and facts to 20. Recent assessments showed that scores and times have improved. Again well done if your children have been practising at home. Children have developed their understanding of multiplication and division and are getting more confident being able to problem solve. They are now developing their skills using fractions. It has been wonderful to see the amount of children across Key Stage 1 using NUMBOTS both in school and at home. Well done to all of the children who were identified as NUMBOTS Champions in Spring term. All of our champions received a certificate and a book. The Year 1 and Year 2, year group leaders each received a special Numbots Easter egg. Well done everyone!



In History, the children developed their understanding of chronology through their study of Transport. They looked at a range of sources and created a timeline of the history of the wheel, automobiles, locomotives and air travel. The children were particularly interested to find out about George Stephenson and Amelia Earhart. They created their own fact files and were really inspired by both of their stories.



Year 2 children will sit their National Year 2 SATs assessments early in the Summer term. It is very important that children are in school each day and that they arrive punctually having had a brain boosting breakfast. This will set them up for a successful day.

In Literacy, the children will be comparing traditional tales and using ideas from them to inspire their own tales. In Maths, children will complete their learning about fractions and will develop their understanding of money, shape and time. Children should continue to use the following websites to develop fluency in basic maths skills.

NUMBOTS (*Children have password*)

<https://play.numbots.com/#/intro>

HIT THE BUTTON (*No password needed*)

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>

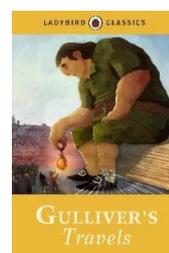
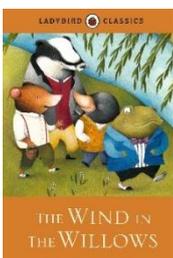
This half term, Year 2 will begin their Bright Lights, Big City topic. This is a geography topic in which children will explore more about their local area with the main focus being on their nearest city, Newcastle.

In Science, children will begin their topic on Plants. They will plant their own bulbs and seeds. They will observe the process of germination, documenting changes as the seeds grow into mature plants. They will investigate what plants need to grow and stay healthy.

In Science children continued to develop their understanding of habitats. They looked at a range of UK and wider world habitats and identified the plants and animals that live there. They thought about how plants and animals within a habitat depend on each other. They also looked closely at food chains within a habitat and micro habitats.

In Design Technology the children researched, designed, made and then evaluated a moving moon buggy, inspired by our text Bob. Man on the Moon. The buggies had to be sturdy, able to move and be alien proof!

This half term Year 2 will be reading some classic texts, including: The Wind in the Willows, Treasure Island, Black Beauty and Gulliver's Travels.



Year 3

Year 3 have had a brilliant Spring term and the progress made in both learning, maturity and confidence has been really lovely to see.

In literacy, Year 3 had an excellent time creating a non-chronological report based on a Unicorn or dragon of their own creation. So if you have ever wondered what a rainbow unicorn or an ice dragon eats just ask Year 3!



Escape from Pompeii was Year 3's core text in Literacy. The children created a diary entry from the point of view of one of the main characters. The children worked really hard to incorporate time adverbials and show rather than tell how the character's felt throughout the disaster at Pompeii in 79AD.



In Maths, children completed their learning on multiplication and division. Year 3 were introduced to the formal method of short multiplication and looked at the difference between grouping and sharing in division. The children then moved on to learning about money - a priceless skill (get it?) and statistics where they revisited pictograms and tally charts and were introduced to bar charts and tables.

Year 3 have loved learning about volcanoes and earthquakes in Geography. They learned about the different layers of the Earth, how volcanoes and earthquakes occur and the various types of volcanoes around the world. The children identified the tectonic plates on a world map and discovered that there is an overlap with these and where volcanoes and earthquakes happen. We don't think they will fancy a holiday anywhere near the ring of fire anytime soon!

In Science, Year 3 learned about forces and magnets. They have identified push and pull forces on different objects and labelled the north and south pole of a magnet. The children have carried out numerous investigations, including how different surfaces create different levels of friction and tested various materials to see which were magnetic.

This half term Year 3 are looking at traditional tales, focussing on fairy tales written from another point of view and then move on to the legend of Chang and the Magic Brush.

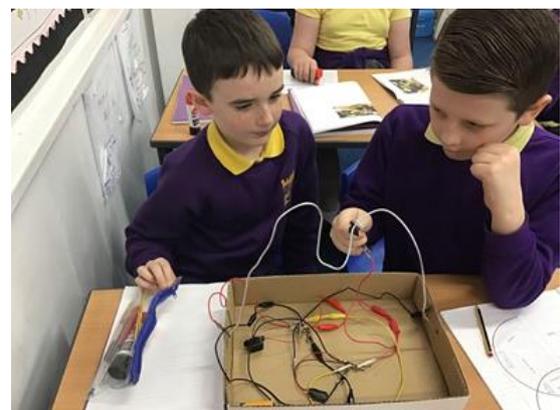
In Maths, Year 3 are learning all about fractions; starting with halves, quarters and thirds, before moving on to finding fractions of amounts; equivalent fractions and finally adding and subtracting fractions.

In Topic, Year 3 are exploring about how buildings have changed throughout history, focussing on the Victorian house at Cragside and the impact William Armstrong had on our local area.

In Science, they are learning all about plants. They will be labelling the parts of a plant and will use the story The Tiny Seed to produce some writing on the journey of how a seed develops into a plant. The children will undertake experiments dissecting plants to find its components.

Year 4

Last half term, Year 4 enjoyed their topic of Electricity in Science. The children learned how to make circuits using a variety of components and also investigated which materials were conductors and insulators. Furthermore, Year 4 applied their Science learning to a DT project where they designed and created buzz wire games. The children really enjoyed making their games using different electrical devices and they also utilised their problem solving skills to test and evaluate their games. Additionally, the children wrote a set of instructions on how to make a buzz wire game as part of their Literacy non-fiction unit.



In Geography last half term, the children explored the country of Greece and compared the humans and physical geographical features of Greece with those in the UK. As a result, the children thought carefully about the similarities and differences between the two countries and they also had the opportunity to conduct research using Google Maps to locate some of the features.

Year 4 studied adventure stories in Literacy and read *Brightstorm* by Vashti Hardy. The children enjoyed hearing about the adventure undertaken by the characters and learned how to write dialogue to further the action in a text.

Another genre which the children explored last half term was mystery writing. The children identified the features of mystery texts and applied their learning to create suspense in a mysterious setting description.

This half term, Year 4 will be learning about the environment in Science during their unit on Plants, Living Things and their Habitats. The children will also link this to their Literacy work when writing a persuasive letter to persuade the council to improve the local environment. In History, the children will complete an historical enquiry to investigate how sport and leisure has changed over time. In Maths, the children will continue their learning on fractions. The children will also be preparing for their residential visit to Dukeshouse Wood by reading a contemporary fiction text in Literacy - *Cliffhanger* by Jacqueline Wilson - where the characters participate in a residential visit to an activity centre.

Year 5

Last half term in Literacy, the children enjoyed delving into *The London Eye Mystery* as they followed Ted and Kat around the capital city trying to solve the mystery of their missing cousin. They wrote their own mystery stories based on the novel and included some exciting plot twists! During the last part of the term, the children wrote a report about London, focusing on the human features and including some amazing facts and interesting information. In Maths, the children have completed their unit on area and perimeter, applying mental maths methods well and showing resilience when faced with challenges.

In Science, the children have learned all about forces including gravity, air and water resistance and friction. They have completed investigations to consider which material would be best to create a dancefloor with, what type of design would be most effective for a parachute and which liquids provide the most water resistance. They were enthralled by a visit from Adam from the Kielder Observatory, who talked to the children about technologies used in space travel and challenged the children to design and make a parachute which would protect an egg from breaking as it dropped to the ground.

Earlier in the half term, the children enjoyed a trip to Newcastle. They explored the exhibitions at The Great North Museum, revising learning about the Romans and Anglo Saxons, and then took part in a walking tour around Newcastle City Centre to examine the fantastic Victorian architecture the city centre has to offer. Some of the Year 5 children later enjoyed a residential trip to London, where they visited the Imperial War Museum, the Science Museum, the London Eye, the Lyceum Theatre for a showing of *The Lion King* and enjoyed several walks around the capital city to take in the sights there. They also visited Warner Bros. Studios to experience the wizarding world of Harry Potter.





This half term, Year 5 children will continue to read and write in a range of genres in Literacy and will continue learning about fractions, decimals and percentages in Maths. They will revisit past eras of History as they learn about the theme of Crime and Punishment in History lessons. In Science, they will learn all about the life cycles of different animal groups and how plants and animals reproduce. Excitingly, the children will be able to observe changes in the life cycle of a butterfly as we examine metamorphosis in detail from caterpillar to butterfly in the classroom, before releasing them into the wild on our school field!

Year 5 will be reading Young Sherlock Holmes, which links with our Crime and Punishment unit in History.

Year 6

It has been another busy half term for Year 6 and those SATs are almost here! Revision clubs begin after the Easter holidays and more than half the year group have expressed their interest in taking advantage of this highly valuable time. It's not too late to join us if your child has not already done so. In English this term, the children have written mystery stories, instructions on how to trap various imaginary household pests (lots of fun was had creating these!) and twisted tales where the children could really let their creativity fly. In Maths, they have studied fractions and built upon their learning from previous years to add, subtract, multiply and divide.

As well as working incredibly hard for their upcoming tests, Year 6 have also enjoyed learning about North and Central America, particularly finding out about the physical and human features of that continent. They were amazed to discover that New York City is actually a collection of 50 islands. The children used their knowledge of electric circuits to plan and carry out several enquiries and they really enjoyed pretending to be electrons travelling along an electric current when they made a human diagram outside.

In Art, the children continued their work on resist techniques and thoroughly enjoyed creating patterns with wax and paint.

In Science, we shall be studying classification of species, in particular, the work of the Swedish botanist and zoologist, Carl Linnaeus. Human Rights will be our topic in History where we will learn about the slave trade and Civil Rights Movement in America and also Women's Rights in the UK (suffragettes) and further afield in modern times (Malala Yousafzai).

We shall be reading Refugee Boy by Michael Morpurgo which will link to our history topic in human rights.



Key Stage 2 Art

This half term, Key Stage 2 will be able to visit the travelling gallery bus, brought to us by BALTIC art gallery. BALTIC have curated an exhibition based on food production and consumption and are keen to get the children discussing this topic through art.

Attendance Update

Thank you to all those parents and carers who continue to support their child's attendance. We recognise that there continues to be challenges with COVID as well as the normal winter bugs that hopefully will diminish as the weather warms up. Miss Brown, our Attendance Officer, is always on hand to support families with attendance. Her school contact number is 07971791810 and can be used to send medical evidence or contact her regarding attendance concerns or queries. Please remember family holidays will not be authorised during term time. Those children who have been lucky enough to maintain their attendance throughout the year received certificates at the end of term and 3 children were the winners of the ASDA voucher draw which not only rewards good attendance but also recognises improved attendance. 5ER currently are in the lead in terms of class attendance, having won the attendance trophy the most. All classes are in a hotly contested competition to win a class treat at the end of the year.

Punctuality

We have noticed an increase in the number of children who are late for school and are entering via the main entrance regularly. After Easter senior staff will be monitoring this and contacting parents of children who are consistently late or talking to them when they arrive. Being on time for school sets the tone for the day and ensures routines are established. Please support your child to be on time for school.

Rewards

Children had a chance to spend their Epraise merits at the end of last term on a range of experiences from outdoor games sessions to baking and crafts. They work hard to achieve the merits and it is always lovely to see them reaping the rewards of their hard work and effort.

We have had some lovely times in Always Club this half term with the children enjoying hot chocolate and sweet treats at the end of the week. Being chosen for Always Club is a real honour and a reward for always following our Horton Values and giving 100% every day in school.

School Council

The School Council are now focusing on access to the outdoor spaces and how we maximise our outdoor space and time. They have surveyed their class and next term we will formulate actions from these results. During the summer term we will be utilising the field which we are blessed to have and looking at ways to make the most of the space.

Sports Update

This half term, the Year 6 football season resumed with the team playing games against both Bothal Primary School and Chantry Middle School. Despite results not going their way, the team remained resilient and left each match with smiles on their faces. The team are very excited about the upcoming matches at the beginning of Summer 1. The Sports Leaders have continued to deliver sessions at lunchtimes in KS2 each day to help support pupils in getting their active 60 minutes per day. So far, this has been a tremendous success and it has been brilliant to see the Sports Leaders grow in confidence as well as seeing so many pupils happy and active at lunchtimes. Eight girls in Year 6 were selected to create a School Sports Organising Crew (SSOC). They took part in training with the Blyth and Bedlington School Games Officer to learn about how to plan and deliver activities. They will be playing a big part in how Active Week runs in Summer 2. Since then, the SSOC have begun delivering sessions to KS1 children at lunchtimes.

Important notice – Nursery parents

As you know we are very lucky to have such immense school grounds and we want to be able to utilise this space giving children access to the field as the weather improves. For security reasons, when the weather is fine and grass is dry we will be shutting off the top gate on Cowpen Road nearest to Asda between 12.00pm and 1.15pm. Previously we have managed this with additional staff but this is not always possible and has restricted the use of the field on some days. This will affect Nursery parents dropping children off for afternoon nursery. These parents will have to enter via the gate from Cowpen Road, nearest main reception, and walk down the main drive and around the back of the building to the Nursery entrance. During Summer 1 this will be decided on a daily basis and a text sent to inform if the gate is shut as there may be days when the grass is not dry enough. From Summer 2 this is likely to be for the full half term. I understand this may cause some Nursery parents inconvenience but we hope you will appreciate this is to ensure our children have access to a larger outdoor space and increased opportunities to be active. Our children tell us they love using the field but we need ensure access to the site is fully secure when we do this.

Thank you once again for your on going support.

Best wishes

Mrs Nichola Irving

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Please note whilst we endeavour to stick to these dates occasionally amendments have to be made in response to other events in school, which are often out of our control. However, if you are unable to make an event, please contact school and we will discuss how the information can be shared in an alternative way.

Tuesday 26 April	Reception visit to Tweddle Farm
Friday 6 May	Reception & Year 6 Heights and Weights
Monday 9 May	Year 6 SATs Baltic Travelling Gallery Bus
Tuesday 10 May	Year 6 SATs Baltic Travelling Gallery Bus
Wednesday 11 May	Year 6 SATs
Thursday 12 May	Year 6 SATs
Friday 13 May	Year 6 SATs
Monday 16 May	Year 3 visit to Cragside (provisional date)
Monday 23 May	Year 4 Dukeshouse Wood
Tuesday 24 May	Year 4 Dukeshouse Wood
Wednesday 25 May	Year 4 Dukeshouse Wood
Friday 27 May	School closes at normal time for half-term
Monday 6 June	School re-opens Year 1 Phonics screening week