

School Newsletter

Spring Term 2A 14/02/2020

Message from the Headteacher



I hope you have enjoyed the parent's evenings which have taken place this week. They come at the end of another busy half term and are a valuable opportunity for us to update you on your child's progress.

As always, as well as the focus on reading, writing and maths it seems that every year group has been doing something exciting!

Children in the Early Years went to watch a performance of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' at the Hippodrome in Birmingham City Centre. Nursery and Year 1 children have had Living Eggs in their classrooms this half term. The children watched and waited for the chicks to hatch. The highlight of the term so far for Year 2 pupils must have been their fantastic Chinese New Year festival assembly. Thank you to everyone involved!

For KS2, pupils in Year 3 had the opportunity to visit Cadbury World to learn all about chocolate and how we use it. Year 4 have had a visit from Professor McGinty as part of their work on Ancient Egypt and Year 5 have been creating salads suitable for an athlete for their work in DT.

Year 6 have had their annual visit to London as part of their work on 'The London Eye Mystery'. Not surprisingly they visited The Eye, but also Buckingham Palace and Downing Street. The children behaved extremely well and had a fantastic day.

So, you can see from all of the above that the children in every year group definitely deserve their half term holiday!

This is the time of year we give out our surveys to all pupils, staff and parents to get everyone's views on life at Clifton Primary School. These surveys tell us what we're doing well and also what we can do to improve. Thank you to all parents who have taken the time to respond. We will let you have the summary of results after the half term break.

Attendance has improved slightly on last term but it is not where we want to be. I am aware that there are a number of illnesses making the rounds at the moment but I know I can count on you to assist in recovering our figures.

Finally, thank you for continued support and I hope you all have a restful and enjoyable half term break.

Children return to school on Monday 24th February 2020.

Nursery



Nursery have been discovering lots of new things this half term! We began by finding out about Chinese New Year, tasting noodles and making dragons. We then read the stories 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea' by Judith Kerr, and 'Whatever Next!!' by Jill Murphy. The stories featured lots of food so, we had a go at making our own sandwiches and cakes. The children learned how to use knives safely to spread the butter and jam and then shared them with a friend. When they made cakes, the children used their arm muscles to stir the mixture and used a timer to see when the cakes would be ready.

We also had the chance to see some newly hatched chicks and talk about what they looked like and how they felt. The children were fascinated to see videos of eggs hatching and now they want to find

out about other animals that hatch from eggs too.

In our last week, we have been doing our Physical Development parent workshops and strengthening our core muscles with Mrs Holiday. The Nursery children are well on their way to becoming super strong!



Reception



Reception have had an amazing start to the new year. We began by sharing our new year resolutions and some very brave children read their resolutions out in assembly. Zeeshan wanted to be healthier by eating more fruit and vegetables and Eva wanted to do more homework! In Maths this term, we have been learning about 2D shapes, adding, subtracting and doubling numbers to 10 and exploring numbers to 15. Next term, we will be exploring numbers to 20, adding and subtracting single-digit numbers to 20.

In English, we have been reading the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen. We went to watch the performance at the theatre in Birmingham and loved it! Unfortunately, the bear escaped and broke into our reception classrooms, so we went on our own bear hunt. We couldn't go over it! We couldn't go under it! We had to go through it and we caught the bear! Don't worry, we delivered him safely back to the zoo. Towards the end of term we became astronauts and explored space through our English lessons. We opened our own space travel agency and booked lots of holidays to different planets. We wouldn't recommend you visiting Venus as it has no water! If you would like to book a trip to space, come and visit our space travel agency. We currently have some good deals for the half term!

We hope you have a wonderful half term and we look forward to seeing you soon.



Year 1



Year 1 have had a very busy and exciting half term. In IPC, the children have been learning about animals. They were delighted when the Living Eggs arrived this term. The children watched and waited patiently for the eggs to hatch. Most of the children and the teachers couldn't contain their excitement when the first egg began to hatch and a chick appeared! The children were astonished to see how the chick was wet at first and kept on falling over but then dried off and was soft and golden. Year 1 couldn't wait to come to school every day to see how the chicks were growing and changing. They have taken special care of the chicks this term.

In English, the children have been learning about 'Lost and Found' by Oliver Jeffers. This story is about a lost penguin and a boy. The children have researched penguins and have used their knowledge to write a non-chronological report about penguins. The children were surprised to learn that penguins have a thick layer of fat to keep their bodies warm and that their feathers are waterproof. The children have also written some wonderful book reviews about 'Lost and Found' and have written letters to Oliver Jeffers expressing their enjoyment of this book. Zulaika wrote, "I like the part when the boy and the penguin become friends."

In Maths, the children have been learning to count in groups of tens and ones to fifty. The children practised counting gold coins and comparing who had the most. The children have been learning to explain their understanding of these numbers. Sufyan told his class how he knew 45 was greater than 29. "45 is greater than 29 because the number of tens in 45 is greater than the number of tens in 29."



Year 2



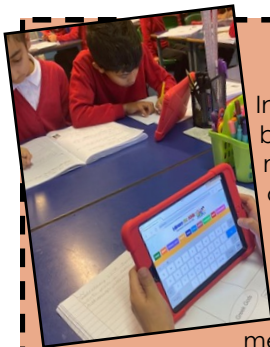
We've had another jam packed half term in Year 2. We started the half term off with our IPC topic - Pirate Adventures. The children absolutely loved pretending to be pirates for the morning and even created their very own pirate names. Activities like this really allow our children to become confident speakers and actors! The children explored different maps of the world and successfully identified different countries, oceans and continents. As well as this, they were able to identify several human and physical features and even helped to create their own keys.

We were also very lucky to have a visit from Falconry UK who came in and showed us lots of different types of owls and several other species of birds. Pupils and staff were even given the opportunity to hold some of them! They were very brave to do this.

The biggest highlight of this half term though has to be our Chinese New Year festival. Were you able to come along and watch it? The children and staff did an outstanding job putting together such amazing performances and the children contributed with songs, dances and lots of brilliant acting. Our narrators did an excellent job guiding us through the story behind this festival and were ever so professional using the microphones. The Year 2 classes will happily tell you that the Kung Fu dancing was their favourite part and we regularly use this as our 'Wake Up, Shake Up' routine now.

We've been having a big push on learning our times tables and we are so pleased to see how well the whole year group are doing on Times Tables Rockstars. The pupils particularly enjoyed battling each other on National Number Day to see who could gain the most correct answers. Please continue to use this at home as it makes a big difference in their lessons.





Year 3

In Maths, we have been focusing on multiplication and division. We have used place value to calculate mentally and used formal written

methods to multiply two and three-digit numbers by one-digit numbers.

In English, Year 3 have been exploring Greek Myths as inspiration for writing and to develop their comprehension skills. We have been analysing a warning tale, focusing on suspense writing and temptation. We also did some research on Greek Gods and wrote a non-chronological report about them.

In IPC, we have been focusing on the discovery of chocolate and learning about how chocolate is made. We also went to Cadbury

World to understand the production of chocolate in our local area.

In Science, we have been learning more about the human body and what we need to keep ourselves healthy and nourished.



Year 4

What a busy time we had last term! First of all, the teachers would like to say a big thank you for all your support with the Rainforest Café. With your support, we raised £296. This will be donated to the World Wildlife Foundation.

In Maths this term, we have been focusing on fractions. The children have been able to consolidate their knowledge of times tables up to 12 x 12. The children investigated the connections and patterns within and between different multiplication tables, before focusing on the seven and nine times tables. After this, the children progressed to find equivalent fractions and were introduced to mixed numbers and improper fractions. The children have been busy adding and subtracting fractions, calculating fractions of quantities and solving word problems involving fractions.

In English, we have been studying 'The Firework-Maker's Daughter' by Phillip Pullman. The children have enjoyed exploring the characters' thoughts and feelings and thought about the reasons for their actions. We have also linked our Whole Class Reading to this book; the children have made some excellent inferences, especially when looking at the relationship between Lila and her father Lalchand. The children wrote a suspense story and thought hard about the features they needed to include to write a successful story.

In IPC we have been learning all about Ancient Egypt. The children have learnt about the process of mummification, thought about why the Nile was so important, developed their knowledge of Ancient Egyptian Gods and found out about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. Year 4 also had an exciting visit from Professor McGinty who taught the children even more about ancient Egypt.



In Science, Year 4 have been learning all about the digestive system. The children have made a working model of the digestive system to help them understand what happens to food when we eat it.

In PSHE, we have been focusing on staying safe on the internet and learning about our online identity, as well as celebrating Safer Internet Day.

In PE, the children have been developing their multi skills and have continued to enjoy their weekly swimming lessons.



Year 5

The children have continued to work hard in Year 5 this term. In Maths, we have been learning about fractions and decimals. The children have been busily improving their times tables through Times Table Rockstars.

In English, we have been reading 'Varjak Paw' by S.F. Said and learning about other tales of fear. The children have been learning techniques to create suspense in their writing.

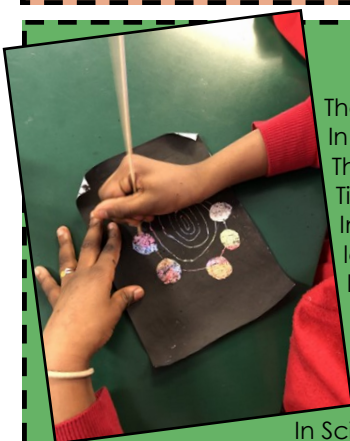
Our IPC topic is 'The Great, the Bold and the Brave'. The children have been learning about the Romans, Anglo Saxons and the Vikings and how they have influenced the world we live in.

In Science, we have been learning about forces and the effect they have on the world around us. The children have carried out some fun experiments involving water, pulleys and levers!

In Art, we have been learning about some great artists and have created art in the style of Klee, Kandinsky, Braque and Van Gogh.

In PE, the children have been learning the skills needed for tag rugby.

Our DT project this term has been really exciting! The children have planned, created and evaluated a salad suitable for an athlete. They had to ensure they used foods from all the food groups to create a delicious meal.



Year 6

In English, we have been reading 'The London Eye Mystery' by Siobhan O'Dowd. To coincide with this, we went to London to take a trip on The London Eye, just as the characters in the story did. Everyone had a wonderful day and got to see lots of famous sights such as; Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and Downing Street. The children were an absolute credit to the school and behaviour was terrific. The trip on The Eye was incredible – we could see views across the whole of London and it helped us to comprehend the book even further. Alongside reading this book, the children have written a newspaper



report about the mystery.

The children have completed the whole of the Year 6 Maths curriculum covering: algebra, co-ordinates, number sequences (including finding the nth term), properties of circles, formal written methods for addition, subtraction, long multiplication and long division, fractions, multiples, factors, prime numbers, square numbers, cube numbers, common factors and lowest common multiples. We have now started to revisit all of these areas, as part of our intensive revision programme, in preparation for their SATs.

In IPC, we have been focusing on empires prior to 900AD, including the Mayans, the Islamic Empire and the Kingdom of Benin. The children have worked hard and written some excellent adventure stories.

In our 'Electricity' Science topic, we built series and parallel circuits and investigated resistance using a range of components. We also made switches and evaluated the effect within a circuit. We researched renewable and non-renewable energy sources and the impact they have on the environment. We have also been looking at classification of the living kingdoms and learning about some famous scientists such as Edward Jenner. All Year 6 classes have had the opportunity to work with our Artist in Residence, Andrew Timms, this term. The children explored monoprinting and created some amazing Mayan masks.

The pupils are really enjoying their American Football course in PE and are working hard to develop these skills. We will be selecting a team to represent the school in an American Football competition in the summer term.



PE and Sport

PE - Year 6 have begun a new and exciting American Football project, devised by NFL UK. Year 5 have improved their rugby skills and Years 3 and 4 have continued to improve their Multi Skills and Fitness ready for a tournament in April. Next half term we are delighted to welcome the 'Chance to Shine' cricket programme as part of staff CPD. EYFS and KS1 continue to work on their physical literacy skills.

School Games - The Year 3 and 4 gymnastics team won the Partnership Competition at Blue Coat School and have qualified for the Birmingham finals at the GMAC Centre. Clifton teams have already competed in Girls Football, Dodge Ball and Sportshall Athletics and look forward to entering numerous events from March until July. Ms Stocker has an amazing dance troupe who came 6th in the West Midlands British Dance Off at The Alexandra Theatre and are hopeful of a great performance in the Clifton Partnership Festival.



Attendance

Attendance so far this academic year is **95.51%** and persistent absence has dropped to **8.9%**.

This is an improvement on last term but is still lower than where we want to be.

Please remember that attendance is key to your child's attainment and it is important that they are at school in order to learn.

We wish you a well-deserved break and we look forward to seeing you all again on **Monday 24th February**

