NEWSLETTER

May 2024

Dear Parents and Friends

Well here we are about to start the final half term of the academic year. The final half term is always a busy one with visits, Equalities Week, Active Week, Sports Day and much more; there are lots for your children to look forward too!

Exemption from PE reminder

If your child, for medical reasons, needs to be exempt from a PE lesson or a series of them, you must inform us in writing. We cannot accept verbal messages at the door or via the children or telephone messages. The letter or email must state medical reason for not being able to take part with a start and end date. If the end date needs to extended another letter / email must be sent. Alternatively, we have form at Reception that can be completed to give the required information.

Sports Update

During Summer 1, the sports leaders developed their coaching skills by running activities with Year 2 children during a sports festival. In addition to this, they will be doing the same with Year 1 in Summer 2 as well as helping to run activities at sports day. Year 6 also took part in an orienteering festival where they were required to solve different problems as a group. The year 5/6 football team also finished their spring season with games against Dr Tomlinson (Rothbury), Meadowdale and St Bede's primary schools. They were excellent representatives of Horton Grange throughout.

Attendance Update

The class competition for the best overall attendance is gathering pace, especially between 2EG, 5ER and6CW.

Each week the top 3 classes are awarded a bronze, silver or gold star on their chart. The winners (which will be decided net half term) will win a class treat.

Attendance continues to be a huge focus at school due to the importance of it and the impact on the children's progress and attainment.

We would ask you to ensure you communicate with us if your child is ill as this affects how they are coded on the register. Please contact the school office by 9 am.

Please also note that we do not authorise holidays in term time and whilst as a school we have chosen not to issue fines for holidays taken in school time, they do affect your child's attendance and may trigger further action including through the Education Welfare Team.

We look forward to seeing all children in school every day they can!

Rewards

The ever popular Asda prize draw will take place towards the end of the summer term and those children with 100% attendance have a special treat! Well done to all those children and families whose attendance remains above 95%.

Always Club

This half term, Always Club has had the pleasure of going outside with juice and biscuits, enjoying the sunshine (when we've been able to) and reflecting on the excellent attitudes they have demonstrated to earn their place at Always Club. It really is testament to how well they follow and show all the Horton Values if they are chosen by their teacher. Well done to all those who have attended this half term!

OPAL

We have been able to open the forest area at long last whilst we made the most of the short spell of dry weather. It was still only accessible for children with wellies - we are still collecting these so if you have any spare we would love to have them! The children loved getting back to their den building. We have also bought some new scooters for the Key Stage 2 yard to supplement those donated and the children are loving wheelie Wednesdays! We are hoping to eventually roll this out in Key Stage 1. As always we are grateful for your donations. They are helping with the continuing OPAL journey and having a huge impact on the play experience of all our children.

SHARING OUR LEARNING

Two Year Olds

This half term, we welcomed some new starters, they have settled very well and are enjoying exploring their new environment.

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. They were also encouraged to build obstacle courses using planks and crates, they were all willing to have a go.

There were lots of messy activities to encourage exploration of their senses and using appropriate vocabulary of texture etc.

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 cereal hoops for threading.

During Summer 2, the two year olds will be making the most of the finer weather with lots more outdoor opportunities. There will be lots of sand resources and a water tray for the children to explore.

There will be more weekly cooking/food activities to support making choices, following instructions and to encourage making links with home and mark making opportunities 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.

It would be great to see what the children are doing when they are not with us. If you have any news or photographs, you can upload these onto Tapestry for us to share with the children.

The following 10 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 Scheffter
The Tiger Who Came to Tea - Judith Kerr
Whatever Next - Jill Murphy
Peace at Last - Jill Murphy
The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle

Reminders for two year olds

Could parents ensure that their child has spare clothing each day in case they need to be changed for any reason and provide nappies and wipes daily.

Nursery

Building on knowledge gained from their previous seasonal learning, the children in nursery explored the natural world under a magnifying glass in their topic, How Does Your Garden Grow? They began by discovering what plants need to flourish and put this to the test by planting some seeds of their own. Establishing that it is not only flowers that grow from seeds but also fruit and vegetables, the children in Nursery channelled their learning through the story Oliver's Vegetables. The story was a fantastic opportunity to learn about how to grow vegetables and the children thoroughly enjoyed embarking on an investigation to see which is the year group's favourite, using tallies to display the data. Taking a closer inspection of the garden, the nursery children turned their attention to the creatures who call the garden their home. The children used a variety of resources to create their own minibeasts; from junk modelling to playdough creations, they really put their artistic skills to the test!

Next half term, the children in nursery will begin their topic, On a Journey. They will turn their attention to modes of transport and destinations, using this learning to create stories and maps to assist in telling the tales of their journeys. As the next chapter begins for Nursery, they will be reflecting on their year and preparing for all the exciting opportunities awaiting them in Reception!

Reception

This half-term, Reception put down roots and spread their leaves as they blossomed into little gardeners with the topic "From tiny seeds to plants with leaves". Every child got the chance to plant a bean and watch it grow. They refreshed their outdoor area by planting flower seeds and getting the chance to watch their handiwork develop, as the days lengthened and became warmer. The children loved focusing on the story of Jack and the Beanstalk; they retold and innovated their own stories using puppets in the Tales Toolkit area, wrote

their own versions of the story and created their own story maps. After 5 weeks of taking care of their beanstalks, they brought them into school to be measured so that we could compare the different heights of them!

There were some budding artists emerging this half term; art club was a huge success! The children created their own tiger and lion creations over two week blocks, focusing on using different skills, tools and materials each time. The tiger creations, inspired by The Tiger who came to Tea by Judith Kerr, were phenomenal and all entirely unique! The children had the choice of printing with various materials, drawing and mark making using pencils, pens or oil pastels and also painting with acrylic paints. The outcome was amazing and the children became much more confident with making their own choices and thinking about selecting tools, materials and colours for a particular purpose.

During their final half term in Reception, the children will be preparing for Year One and all the exciting opportunities that it will bring. This will include taking part in a transition day as well as making All About Me booklets for their new class teacher. The topic of Underground, over ground and on the ground; minibeasts are all around will provide plenty of opportunities for children to learn the names of a range of minibeasts, facts about each and also ways of identifying them. The children will explore a range of non-fiction books about minibeasts and will also write their own fact files to demonstrate their understanding. Using magnifying glasses and other scientific equipment, the children will hunt for minibeasts on our yard and also the big field. Reception will prepare for Sports Day by continuing to practise their throwing, catching, running and jumping skills as well as continuing to exploit the good weather and utilise learning opportunities outdoors.

The class story will be Superworm by Julia Donaldson. The children will explore the story, written by the popular author whose books we read in the Autumn term, and will learn about the different minibeasts from the story. They will expand their vocabulary when we generate ideas to describe the different characters in the story and the differences between the minibeasts.

Year 1

During Summer 1, Year 1 have been working really hard to prepare for the phonics screening check which will take place in June. They are very proud of their own achievements so far.

They were learning all about Africa when they read Handa's Hen - a story from a different culture! They looked at the different clothes the characters wore in the story as well as finding Africa on a map of the world.

The children have really enjoyed their 3 o'clock stories. They love participating in the book reviews and rating the stories out of 5. They are excited to continue this next half term and explore more stories. The children have loved sharing their stories from home as part of our book club. Please encourage your child to bring their favourite stories to share.

In Maths, Year 1 have been exploring different forms of measurement. The children had great fun learning about capacity. They used water, sand and cubes to explore the capacity of lots of different containers. The children also explored length and height. They used non-standard measurements such as hands, feet and cubes to measure different objects found around the classroom. The children then practised their measuring skills using a ruler.

They have also been working hard counting in 2s, 5s and 10s and using this knowledge as an introduction to multiplication and division.

The children were enthusiastic throughout our educational visit to The Rising Sun Country Park. At the Rising Sun the children used clay to make their very own 3D animal, they then found a suitable habitat in the park for their animal to live. The children showed off their science knowledge when they became botanists and could identify lots of plants and trees in the park.

The children have also been learning about the artist Andy Goldsworthy. They have created lots of different sculptures from natural resources such as pebbles, acorns, leaves and sticks. They then practised their weaving technique, it was very tricky! They created fabulous weaving sculptures from natural resources. The children had so much fun!

Next half term, the children will continueemma.brownrigg@blythhortongrange.co.uk exploring lots of different stories, poems and non-fiction texts to help them to improve their writing even further.

In maths the children will be exploring numbers to 100. They will also be using clocks to begin to tell the time. They will begin using o'clock and half past… we are sure the children will identify lunch time! The children will also be introduced to different coins when they learn about money. The children will use their knowledge of coins to buy toys in our Year 1 toy shop.

In DT the children will have the opportunity to taste lots of different healthy sandwich fillings. They will take part in a class vote to share their favourite fillings and then use their favourite fillings to design and make their own sandwich… yum!

The children will be taking part in the Big Sing at the Glasshouse in Newcastle. The children have been working hard practising their best singing voices and can't wait to perform. We need a small number of volunteers to come with us, please inform a member of Year 1 if you would like to join us.

Next half term in English, the children will be reading Funny Bones by Janet and Allan Ahlberg as well as our 3 o'clock story The Enormous Crocodile by Roald Dahl.

Year 2

Year 2 staff would like to say well done to all of the children in Year 2 who completed their Year 2 SATS in May. The children showed real resilience and we saw some excellent independent reading and confident problem solving. The children should be extremely proud of their efforts. Well done to all! Though they are not compulsory they do help prepare children for Year 3 and support their learning. The focus in English this half term has been on non-fiction writing. The children wrote a fantastic recount following their visit to Rising Sun Country Park. They made sure to sequence events, use past tense and time ordering words. They also used adverbs to make their writing more interesting to the reader. The children have also practised writing instructions, making links to design technology and learning in science.

In maths, the children have continued to develop their understanding of multiplication and division. In school and at home they have used the fantastic online game Hit The Button to improve their quick mental recall of multiplication and division facts. They have also begun to develop their understanding of fractions, making links to division. Year 2 staff have been impressed to see the children solve more complex problems, with greater confidence.

In Science, the children have enjoyed learning about plants. They planted seeds and bulbs and observed the process of germination. They observed closely as the roots and stem began to grow. The children then planned their own investigation to answer the enquiry question "What do plants need to grow and be healthy?"

In History, the children learnt about George Stephenson, a brilliant inventor and engineer who was born in Northumberland. They explored the history of transport and found out how transport has changed over time. They also found out why the wheel was such an important invention. The children used a range of sources to find out about George Stephenson and his amazing life.

During Summer 2, in English, the children will be making cross-curricular links with their Geography topic, Amazing Africa. They will be writing some acrostic poems about African animals. They will be writing some interesting and informative fact files about the animals. They will also be writing their own journey stories inspired by the African tale The Day the Rains Fell, written by Anne Faundez.

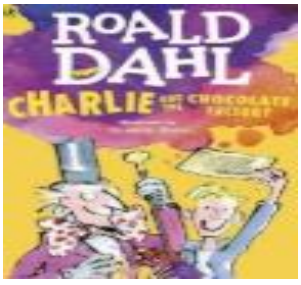
In Maths, the children will consolidate their problem solving skills using all four operations. Following their unit of work on length and height, they will further develop their knowledge of measure through mass, capacity and temperature.

In Science, children will continue with their Animals Including Humans topic, focusing on the importance of exercise for humans to be healthy. They will also find out about the different food groups and look at the importance of good hygiene.

Year 2 Geography topic is all about Africa. The children will be comparing Blyth to Nairobi finding similarities and differences. They will be looking at maps, globes and atlases to develop their place knowledge as well as locating the hot and cold areas of the world. They will be looking at the importance of the rainforest and thinking of ways they can protect and look after these amazing places.

To support children at home, please continue to encourage the children to use NUMBOTS and Hit The Button frequently at home. These are excellent tools to support the children mastering times tables and number facts.

In addition to this, please continue to read 4 x weekly with your child and update their reading record.



This half term the children will be reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl.

Year 3

Year 3 have been working really hard since the Easter break and have thoroughly enjoyed their learning on fairy tales. They used the hilarious twisted fairy tale "The true story of the three little pigs" by Jon Scieszka to create an alternative version of the original. They included exciting sentence openers, up-levelled vocabulary and inverted commas to show speech. Not only did they write alternative stories but they also reported on the events in newspaper articles. They then moved on to non-chronological reports where the children created their own unicorns and dragons to write about - it was wonderful to see their imaginations fired up and the children produced some brilliantly creative writing using non-fiction features such as subheadings and fact-boxes.

In maths, Year 3 have focussed on the introduction of fractions, which has involved lots of work on understanding what makes a whole and part. They have applied their learning on division to understand how to find fractions of amounts. They linked their learning on identifying fractions on a number line to reading scales when measuring mass and capacity. The children have also started to focus on the 8 times tables – including the matching division facts.

This half term's science topic was plants; the children were fascinated to see our own class plants thriving when given the correct conditions to survive. They also got to see first-hand what happens to plants who lack the conditions to live. They especially liked watching cress grow and predicting which pot would grow the best; soil, cotton wool or sand. The children completed practical investigations and enjoyed learning the life cycle of a plant through the story "The Tiny Seed" by Eric Carle.

Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed their trip to Cragside. They were able to learn all about famous local businessman Lord Armstrong while also being able to compare victorian homes with modern homes for their Brilliant Buildings History Topic.

Year 3 were introduced to tennis in PE lessons. They also got engaged in athletics, spending time building their running, jumping and throwing skills. This was great practice for Sports Day.

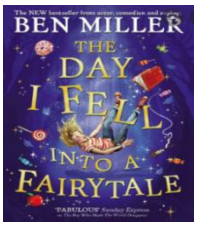
In art, Year 3 enjoyed learning different techniques to draw texture and creating sculptures using a variety of fruit. They also worked as a class to create a Giuseppe Arcimboldi inspired portrait - using fruit.

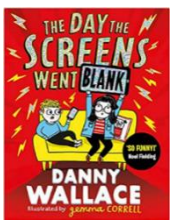
After the half term holidays, Year 3 will start by looking at persuasion relating to environmental issues. This will develop into a debate, helping the children apply their speaking and listening skills. Look out in the next newsletter for how we got on. We will also enter the world of myths as we look at How Birds Got Their Bright Feathers.

In Maths, the children will study time and the properties of shape so any revision at home, telling the time or finding shapes around the house would be great! It would be beneficial to the children if they could spend time on TTRS and practise their times tables at home too.

Within Science, the children will learn about nutrition and how to live a healthy lifestyle. This will link to our school visit to the Glendale Children's County Show, where they will get to see where a lot of their food comes from.

Year 3's class text this half term is The day I Fell Into a Fairy-tale by Ben Miller. We find each year the children love this story and it reminds everyone to believe. They will also be enjoying The Day the Screens Went Blank by Danny Wallace, as the children learn what life would be like without the technology we rely on.





Year 4

This half term, Year 4 have enjoyed writing lots of different text types in English. During the writing process, the children read and wrote their own science fiction stories and contemporary fiction. They created short narratives, including setting descriptions using a wide variety of different features such as fronted adverbials, expanded noun phrases and subordinating conjunctions.

In Science, Year 4 looked at living things and their habitats. The children learned about the different natural and human causes of habitat loss and how this can affect animals. This enabled Year 4 to develop a better understanding on how our environment is ever changing and what the requirements for maintaining or improving it are. To show their understanding of how animal habitats are interlinked, the children created their own classification keys to identify different animals based on their characteristics or habitats.

In PE, the children spent time practising their athletics skills in preparation for Sports Day next half term. Year 4 learned to pace themselves during long distance running events, used their throwing skills to participate in javelin throwing and they also demonstrated improving technique during the long jump. Additionally, Year 4 were fortunate to have a coach from NUFC to teach the children their rounders' unit of work. The children utilised their throwing, catching and fielding skills across a variety of games before applying them to team events.

In DT, Year 4 have created wire sculptures inspired by the artist Anish Kapoor. The children carefully made their wire designs using different bending and twisting shaping. Afterwards, they covered their sculpture with layers of tissue paper in a decoupage style. The final designs displayed some excellent outcomes.

Next half term, Year 4 will focus their learning on the Science topic of the human body. The children will learn about the different types of teeth and their functions and gain knowledge about how the digestive system works. In Geography, the children will learn about the human geography aspect of trade links and how this is connected to their local environment.

Year 4 will be reading The Demon Dentist by David Walliams as their class text. This links to the children's Science topic on the human body.

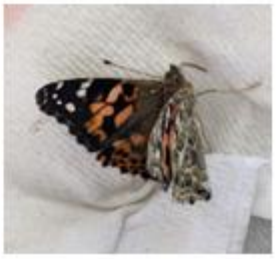
Year 5

This half term in English, Year 5 enjoyed discussing the features of historical fiction and particularly enjoyed reading the text Cogheart by Peter Bunzl. This inspired them to write their own piece of writing which included a historical setting and use of historical language. After this, the children looked at the genre of recounts. They linked their learning from history lessons to write a recount of a day in the life of a victorian prisoner.

In maths, the children have focused on decimals and percentages. During this unit they have worked with decimals up to 2 decimals place, equivalent fractions and decimals (tenths and thousandths), and have learned how to order and compare decimals. They have also learned about area and perimeter of shapes, angles and statistics.

The children have continued to build on times table skills and speed in all maths lessons and by using Times Table Rockstars.

The children really enjoyed their science topic of living things and their habitats. They learned all about the life cycles of different animal groups and how plants and animals reproduce. They particularly enjoyed observing changes over time and watching our class caterpillars go through the wonderful process of metamorphosis.



In history, they focused on the topic of crime and punishment and compared how harsh laws in the victorian era were very different to our justice system today.

In art, the children enjoyed exploring 3D form and texture and developing their sculptural techniques. During this unit, Year 5 were able to use tools and materials to add a variety of textures to clay and began to understand effective joining techniques. They all worked hard to produce a clay sculpture!

To support their learning in science and DT, the children visited the Port of Blyth. They worked together to build a Greenpower kit car, using a range of tools such as wrenches and spanners. They also took part in a coding workshop which was run by the staff at the port. While at the port, the children had a tour of the site, learning about the industries that use the port's facilities and the range of career options available there. They also hopped on-board a light ship and found out how sailors risked their lives for months at a time to keep other vessels safe at sea.

Next half term in geography, children will be revisiting their learning from autumn term as they re-examine South America, this time with a focus on the people of the continent. In science, the children will continue with our focus on biology and living things with a more specific focus on humans and how we develop from birth to old age. In computing, children will create their own EBook based on previous topics taught. In maths, children will explore decimal numbers, negative numbers and volume.

The Year 5 class text will be Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson to link to our learning about South America and the Amazon.

<u>Year 6</u>

This half term, Year 6 finally took their Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) and some children showed their very committed attitude towards their learning by attending revision clubs - very well done for this! The children gave staff good feedback and reported that it had been a useful opportunity to consolidate their learning and build confidence in preparation for the up-coming tests. During SATs week, the children enjoyed coming into school early for a free breakfast club where they could calm their nerves, do some last minute revision and enjoy hot bacon or sausage sandwiches – a great way to start the day! Thank you to all staff for enabling this to happen!

In reward for their hard work during the tests, Year 6 children enjoyed a visit to

the cinema where they watched the Migration movie and enjoyed some tasty treats.

Summer 1 was a very busy term for Year 6 because, as well as preparing for SATs, the children were also continuing to work hard in other areas of the curriculum. In English, they wrote biographies of the well-known local suffragette, Emily Wilding Davison which linked to their learning in history on human rights where the children studied the suffragette movement. They also learnt about the Triangular Trade of Slavery, linking this to previous periods of history studied as well as the civil rights movement in the USA. They particularly enjoyed learning about Rosa Parks and the bus boycott which also involved Martin Luther King, a person they had previously studied in RE as a martyr. In maths, the children learned about fractions, percentages and decimals and how to change these and find equivalents.

In science, the children learned about the standard system of classification for animals and plants established by Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish scientist. They also used their research and enquiry skills to create their own classification key so that they could group animals with similar characteristics together in a zoo. The children worked independently to use internet research to help with this.

Finally, the children thoroughly enjoyed an extended OPAL playtime and PE lesson which took the form of an orienteering session outdoors as another reward and relaxation after SATs.

This half term, Year 6 will be stretching themselves in English working on a Shakespeare play: Macbeth. This is in collaboration with other Blyth primary schools and secondary schools. Some of the work produced will be sent on to the secondary schools to help introduce the pupils. We will also be working on discussion texts which always encourages lively debate! In our maths lessons we will be working on themed projects, consolidation and problem solving. In our science lessons, the children will be finding out all about their circulatory system and looking at how different lifestyle choices affect their bodies. Our geography topic will focus on fair trade. Year 6 will also be making a final push towards their end of year assessments and will also, of course, enjoy some end of year treats as a reward for all their hard work.

Year 6 will by studying Pig Heart Boy by Malorie Blackman which links to our science topic on the heart, lungs and circulatory system.

Summer 2 Clubs

Last half term the children, from Reception up to Year 6, had the opportunity to participate in a variety of different clubs. Some of these included; art club in Reception where the children created amazing paintings of tigers and lions, ball skills club in key stage one and sign language club in key stage two. This half term the following clubs will be available for key stage two children:

Key stage 2

Football Club (y5/6 only)

Running Club

Extra-curricular clubs are beneficial for all children, to help develop confidence, social skills and so much more, so why not sign your child up for one of the clubs on offer.

Uniform reminder

Just a gentle reminder of expectations regarding school uniform footwear - black shoes should be worn not trainers unless there are medical reasons. Leggings are also not permitted as school uniform.

Bikes and Scooters on school site

Another reminder that children and adults must not ride bikes and scooters anywhere within the school grounds.

That just leaves me to say enjoy the half term break.

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.

Monday 3rd June	Year 4 multiplication checks start Parent drop in session after school
Wednesday 5th June	Year 1 Sports Festival (afternoon)
Thursday 6th June	Year 3 visit to Glendale Country Show
Friday 7th June	Year 6 Enterprise Workshop
Monday 10th June	Equalities Week Year 1 Phonics screening week
Wednesday 12th June	KS2 Opal parent event Year 4 Biscuit and Book
Thursday 13th June	EYFS parent workshop
Friday 14th June	Football Freestyler visit to school
Monday 17th June	Active Week Sports Day
Tuesday 18th June	Reserve sports day in case of bad weather
Wednesday 19th June	EYFS Sports day
Friday 21st June	Year 6 Energy day at Port of Blyth
Monday 24th June	Year 4 Residential to Robin Wood
Tuesday 25th June	Year 4 at Robin Wood
Wednesday 26th June	Year 4 at Robin Wood
Thursday 27th June	Reception intake parents meeting
Friday 28th June	Year 6 Safetyworks Trip
Monday 1st July	Reports out this week Year 6 Sports transition event and Blyth Academy
Tuesday 2nd July	New to Nursery parents meeting
Wednesday 3rd July	Parent drop in for report queries
Thursday 4th July	Year 6 Biscuit and Book Reception intake parent and child visit
Wednesday 10th July	Year 6 Transition day at Blyth Academy Nursery new intake parent and child visit
Thursday 11th July	Year 6 Transition day at Blyth Academy Year 6 parent evening at Blyth Academy
Monday 15th July	Year 5 Celebration Event
Tuesday 16th July	Year 1 Celebration Event Year 2 Celebration Event Year 4 Celebration Event
Wednesday 17th July	EYFS Celebration Event Year 3 Celebration Event Reception Graduation
Thursday 18th July	Year 6 Leavers Celebration Year 6 Leavers Assembly
Friday 19th July	School breaks up for summer holiday