St Nicholas School Newsletter

Shining Together- Embracing our Differences

Autumn 1 Newsletter

School News

Dear all,
What a fantastic start to the year it has been. The children have all settled well back into school and our new children are thriving. It's hard to believe we have completed our first half term already of 2026/2027 already. We welcome all of our pupils and staff to the St Nicks community and hope we all have a wonderful academic year.

School Council: The School Council has had a very productive and impactful first half of the autumn term! At the beginning of the academic year, each class elected its new School Council representative, ensuring that pupils have a voice and an opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect school life.

We have held two meetings so far. Our first meeting provided an opportunity to welcome our new representatives and introduce them to their roles and responsibilities. During our second meeting, we focused on an exciting project: **developing our outdoor learning area**.

The School Council is passionate about helping to create an engaging outdoor space where pupils can learn, explore and develop new skills. Our representatives have played an important role in this project by writing letters to local businesses and shops, asking for support through donations of resources, materials or skilled time. We are incredibly proud of their enthusiasm, initiative and commitment to improving our school environment.

Alongside their work on outdoor learning, our School Council continues to make a valuable contribution to everyday school life by helping to deliver **Magic Breakfast** and the **National School Fruit Scheme**. These initiatives support pupils' wellbeing and encourage healthy habits across our school community.

We look forward to seeing our School Council continue to develop their leadership skills, represent pupil voice and make a positive difference throughout the school year.

Important Dates

Monday 2nd November: Children return to school
Tuesday 3rd November and Wednesday 4th November: Reception Play workshops (Invite only)
Monday 2nd November – Thursday 19th November: Parent Day phone calls (replaces Parent's Evening)
Friday 6th November: Diwali
Wednesday 11th November: Day of Remembrance
Wednesday 11th November: Chill and Chat coffee morning with SLT
Friday 13th November: Children in need (Mufti Day)
w/c 16th November: Road Safety Week
w/c 16th November: SaLT advice clinics
Tuesday 24th November: KS1 Winter Craft
Wednesday 25th November: KS2 Winter Craft
Thursday 26th November: M&M Productions
Friday 27th November: School closed to pupil
Monday 7th December: Zones of regulation coffee morning
Wednesday 9th December: Christmas Shows (KS1 am, KS2 pm)
Thursday 10th December: Christmas Shows (KS2 am, KS1 am)
Tuesday 15th December: Father Christmas visit
Wednesday 16th December: Christmas Lunch
Friday 18th December: last day of term. Children finish at 1:30
Monday 4th January 2027: Children return

NHS Toothbrushing: Our NHS Toothbrushing Team had a successful discussion this term with new Discovery Parents informing them about our tooth brushing programme in school. The Team also visited some classes and were pleased with the progress children are making with brushing their teeth in school. Most classes have already begun doing this important session daily and the children are really enjoying learning how to keep their teeth clean and making this a vital part of their school day. We timetable this in after Magic Breakfast in the mornings or straight after lunch. Each pathway varies on the best time of day for their individual class. We hope this daily routine supports the children in maintaining healthy teeth and helps with their tooth brushing routine at home too.

Black History Month: To celebrate Black History Month, St Nicholas School explored this year's theme, "Honouring Our Communities". Pupils learnt about Black individuals who have made important contributions to society through leadership, creativity, service and helping others. Across the school, students took part in a range of activities, including listening and responding to music by Black musicians, exploring and celebrating different skin tones through art, creating collages, and learning about people who have made a positive difference in their communities. These activities encouraged pupils to recognise and appreciate the many ways people contribute to making our communities stronger, more inclusive and supportive.











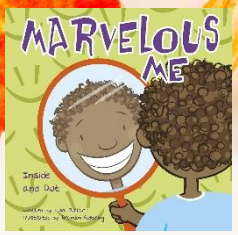


Wear it Yellow: On October 9th, St Nicholas was a sea of sunshine as staff and children dressed in yellow to mark World Mental Health Day! The day was a wonderful celebration of wellbeing, with everyone embracing practical and therapeutic activities throughout the day. Our pupils got creative decorating Colour Monsters using sensory materials, enjoyed sensory play, colouring and painting, and found their zen through yoga and mindfulness sessions. There was plenty of movement and music too, with dancing, singing and playing instruments filling the school with joyful sounds. Some classes created cosy dens for quiet time and relaxation, while calming music provided a soothing backdrop throughout the day. The atmosphere was brilliant – lots of smiles, laughter and engagement from everyone. It was a perfect reminder of the importance of looking after our mental health and wellbeing, and our pupils (and staff!) had a fantastic time while doing so. A huge thank you to everyone who embraced the day with such enthusiasm!





Discovery



We are so proud of our new Reception starters who have only been at school for a month and have already settled into the routine of the school day.

Bumblebee Class: Bumblebee Class have settled in to St Nicholas really well this half term and we are all really proud of them. We have become familiar with the large school environment as we move to different areas for lunch, soft-play, the sensory rooms and outdoor learning to name a few and we are really good at dealing with these transitions which can be tricky sometimes. We have enjoyed the Topic of 'M, Myself and I' where we also linked this to our focus for Black History looking at photographs from some of our friends' families and some items and clothing that we may not have seen before. We have enjoyed the story of 'The Colour Monster' which is all about emotions and this linked nicely as we teach the class about the Zones of Regulation that we use during the day. We have enjoyed the outside learning sessions with Kim where we have observed the signs of Autumn and used the leaves we collected to create some beautiful leaf print art work. We have worked on number, shape, colours and letter sounds in different games and activities in the continuous provision and Attention Autism type activities which the children have engaged with well.
Well done Bumblebee Class!

Ladybird Class: In Ladybird class this half term we have been learning about ourselves and our families. Our topic has lent itself well to us settling into school routines and with support learning independence skills, such as hanging our coats and bags up. We have been having lots of fun exploring all the different activities within the classroom and especially love sensory messy play. We are big fans of Dough Disco and enjoy doing this to music. We have been helped with how to play and share with our new friends we are making in our class. We have explored lots of outdoor activities relating to all areas of the EYFS curriculum and using props and dressing up clothes relating to our big book stories. We also listen to our phonics song's and, at the moment, we are exploring all the foundation stage phonic related activities such as, 'What's in the bag?' to recognise what items start with a particular sound. Ladybirds have experienced a lot of activities, stories and songs relating to our emotions to help us understand how we are feeling and the strategies that support us. We all really enjoy taking part in Sensory circuits that are helping us regulate and be ready for our learning. In Maths, we have been focusing on counting and recognising numbers.







Dragonfly Class: Dragonfly class have settled well and had a lovely start to their journey at St Nicholas school. We have focus on our topic 'Me, Myself and I' which is all about ourselves and our families. To start with we have explored so many topic-based books such as 'From head to toe', 'What makes me a me' and 'Marvelous me'. We have looked at our body parts and our senses for our topic lessons and we particularly enjoyed drawing around ourselves on large pieces of paper and labelling the body parts. In Art we have completed self-portraits, we have taken photos of ourselves (SELFIE!) and completed mini sculptures. We have also explored the story 'Colour monster' which links to our Zones of regulation that we use to help us recognise our feelings and what we can do to help cope when we feel a certain way. We have explored new rooms around school including PE, music, outdoor learning, soft play, sensory room and the immersive room.

Spider Class: Spider class have settled in so well to their new class and school. We have really enjoyed learning to navigate and move around the school, visiting the soft-play, music room, sensory room, PE hall, lunch hall and outside areas. We are also starting to get to know each other during our activities and saying hello to everyone as part of our morning routine. From making our own self-portraits by looking in a mirror to beginning to naming the different parts of our bodies by singing songs like, 'Heads shoulders knees and toes', we have really engaged with our topic, 'Me, Myself and I', this half-term. We have listened to the story of the 'Colour Monster' to help us begin to recognise our feelings and have also enjoyed the story, 'From Head to Toe', exploring different tactile materials and sensory activities. In phonics we have loved listening to the letter songs to help recognise the letter shapes and have played various games to help begin to hear the initial sound in words. In Maths we have loved listening to number rhymes and songs and using toys as props to help us act out the songs, with a focus on counting each object carefully and naming the numerals. Spider class have had a lovely start to the year, and we look forward to more to come.

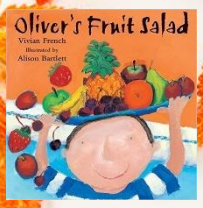












Explore



Our Explore Pathway learn through play or engage in practical experiences in their learning to generalise and transfer skills. Children also work on their social and communication skills through these experiences.

Elephant Class: What a busy and exciting half term we have had in Elephant class. The children have been working incredibly hard developing their confidence, independence and communication skills. Our topic of 'Fighting Fit' has been encouraged throughout all of our lessons. In English we have been looking at 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Olivers Fruit Salad and From Head to Toe'. The children have loved bringing these stories to life through role play, sensory activities and interactive story telling. We even created our own 'Elephant Fruit Salad'. The children had the opportunities to peel, chop, mix and taste different fruits while developing their communication, fine motor and independence. In Maths we have been developing our understanding of numbers, shapes and patterns through practical activities. Numberblocks has been a particular favourite in Elephant class bringing our number learning to life. The children have been practicing counting, recognising numbers, matching quantities, investigating 2d shapes and spotting shapes in our everyday world. In science our topic has been being healthy. We have learnt about our bodies and discovering ways to keep ourselves healthy. In geography we have been learning about our environment where we explored different areas of our school and becoming more familiar with the people and places around us. We look forward to another half term filled with learning, laughter and lots more adventures.

Badger Class: The children have settled wonderfully into Badger Class and have spent the first half term getting to know new routines, adults and the classroom environment. Our theme has been 'Fighting Fit'. We enjoyed sharing 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', with many children able to retell the story using props and join in with repeated phrases. We also linked the story to our maths learning, where we developed our understanding of counting, number recognition and different representations of number. We Then read 'Oliver's Fruit Salad', which was another great success. The children enjoyed helping to make a fruit salad and had the opportunity to taste a variety of fruits. We were incredibly proud that every child tried something new. For Black History Month, we created 'All About Me' posters and celebrated our diverse backgrounds through the story My Hair. This linked wonderfully with our geography, 'Our Environment', we explored countries that are important to our families, locating them on maps and learning about different cultures around the world. It has been a wonderful opportunity to celebrate what makes each of us unique and special. It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate the beauty of growing up in such a diverse and inclusive community.








Hedgehog Class: The children have settled in well and have become familiar with their new routines. It has been lovely to see new friendships budding as they learn and play together. Our topic this half term was "Fighting Fit", where we explored healthy eating through the stories The Very Hungry Caterpillar and Oliver's Fruit Salad. The children enjoyed retelling the stories through sensory activities before using symbols to sequence the events in the correct order. We also explored different fruits using our senses, describing what we could see, smell, touch and taste before making our own delicious fruit salads. In Maths, we developed our early patterning skills by learning to predict what comes next in a series of familiar actions. To challenge the children further, we created patterns using sound pads and jumped along them. We also made caterpillars using pasta circles, helping us to explore repeating patterns in a fun and engaging way. We also focused on number formation through a variety of sensory activities. Alongside this, we explored key number skills including one-to-one counting, counting backwards, and accurately matching quantities to numerals. Nursery rhymes such as Baa, Baa, Black Sheep, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive, and 5 Little Ducks helped us to develop these skills in a fun and meaningful way. We have absolutely enjoyed visits from Nala, our school therapy dog. The children have loved taking part in activities with her and have benefited from the calm and positive experiences she brings to the classroom. During our outdoor learning sessions, the children took part in observational walks where they practised communicating what they could see, hear and feel in the environment around them. These experiences encouraged curiosity, language development and an appreciation of the natural world.

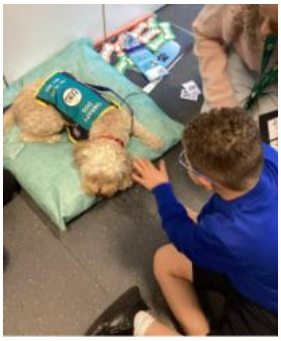
















Squirrel Class: The children have settled into Squirrel Class well and have enjoyed a busy and productive first half-term. In English, we have been exploring the stories *Buddy's Rainforest Rescue* and *Monkey Puzzle*. The children have been developing their early reading comprehension and sentence-building skills, using pictures from the stories to help them answer questions and understand what is happening. They have also enjoyed taking part in a variety of practical activities linked to the stories. In Maths, we have focused on exploring numbers and developing counting skills through practical activities and games. The children have also been learning about 2D and 3D shapes, exploring their similarities and differences through sorting, matching and hands-on activities. During our Communication sessions, the children have enjoyed taking part in interactive games to develop their listening and attention skills, as well as practising responding to and following simple instructions. In Science, we have been learning about different habitats and the animals that live in them. The children have explored what different habitats look and feel like and enjoyed creating their own habitats using a variety of textured materials. They also practised matching animals to their correct habitats. In Art, we have been exploring self-portraits and learning about our facial features. The children have looked closely at their faces using mirrors and photographs, identifying features such as eyes, nose and mouth. They then used different shapes and materials to create their own self-portraits.

Meadow Class: Meadow class has had a fantastic start to the autumn term! The children have settled in well and enjoyed lots of exciting learning activities. In English, we have been reading Monkey Puzzle and buddy's Rainforest Rescue developing our communication, sentence writing, reading, writing and role play skills. In Maths, we have explored counting, recognising and ordering numbers, comparing quantities using more and less, and identifying 2D and 3D shapes and their properties. In Geography we have been learning about rainforests, learning about the animals and plants that live there and discovering the different layers of the rainforest through fun and practical activities. In science we have explored and created rainforest habitats. In PSHE, we have learnt how to stay safe at home while in RE we have explored belonging to different groups. The children have enjoyed practical, sensory and creative activities. We are very proud of their progress and enthusiasm for learning. During black history month, the children explored several fun and engaging activities including learning about Mary Seacole and decorating her hair with beads and glitter.















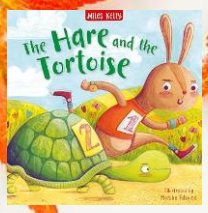

Orchard Class: We have a fantastic first term together. The children have really enjoyed learning about Marvellous Mexico. We enjoyed the Mexican story The Cuckoo and were able to perform it to our friends in class. We did lots of great work on 2D and 3D shapes in Maths and have done so well with our Phonics work. We drew Mat Man in Handwriting without Tears and even drew houses for our Mat Men. We have learnt about the colours in the Mexican flag and looked at where we live and the English Flag. We made a class charter and chose what we are good at and what we like to do. In Art we made a wonderful string painting and took the string for a walk. We have learnt about different habitats and environments in Science and all about hedgehogs, where they live and what they look like. For Black History month we have been learning about Miles Morales the first Puerto Rican and African American Spiderman. The children have been reading regularly, doing spellings and have been cooking this term. They have all settled in so well and it has been so lovely getting to know them and see them make new friendships.

Beech Class: Beech Class have had an awesome half term filled with learning, fun and exploration. Our focus topic this term has been Marvellous Mexico! The children have thoroughly enjoyed sharing the story books Off We Go to Mexico, Cuckoo and The Rain Player, alongside our themed story sacks containing objects linked to each story. The story sacks have helped bring the stories to life, allowing the children to visually identify and explore key items from the books. They have shown great enthusiasm when discussing the stories, using the objects to predict what might happen next and to describe the characters. It has been wonderful to see the children developing their communication skills, imagination and confidence as they shared their ideas and engaged in storytelling activities. In addition to the storybooks, the children have worked incredibly hard in their spelling, reading, handwriting and phonics groups. In Maths, they have developed their understanding of numbers, place value, and 2D and 3D shapes. In Science, we have been exploring different habitats, learning about the animals that live there and the plants that grow there. The children thoroughly enjoyed their first class trip to Hobbledown Adventure Farm Park and Zoo, where they had the opportunity to see animals in their habitats and further their learning through real-life experiences. In PSHE, the children created our class charter, identified their likes and dislikes, and proudly shared their talents with their classmates during our class talent show. In Life Skills, they have focused on developing their independence by learning about their morning routine, choosing the appropriate clothes to wear to school, and packing their own school bags. In Art, we explored the work of the artist Joan Miró, and the children created their own wonderful versions inspired by his artwork. Keeping with our topic, the children have enjoyed making and tasting delicious Mexican dishes in their cooking sessions. They have developed a range of practical cooking skills along the way. I am extremely proud of how well the children have settled into their daily routines, made new friends and developed their independence skills. They have participated brilliantly in both the toothbrushing programme and the Magic Breakfast scheme, showing enthusiasm and responsibility each day. Well done Beech class!

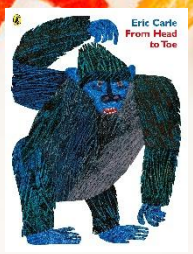








Investigate



Our Investigate Pathway is for our Sensory Learners. Here the children are supported to regulate through sensory integration so that they can access learning. They work on their communication skills using their preferred method of communication, social skills and tolerating spaces with other children. They explore their learning through a range of sensory activities.

Caterpillar Class: What a fabulous and fun-filled term we've had in Caterpillar Class! The children have settled beautifully into their new classroom and have enjoyed exploring, learning and making lots of lovely memories together. Our topic this term has been 'Fighting Fit', and we've had a fantastic time exploring some wonderful stories, including *From Head to Toe*, *Oliver's Fruit Salad* and *The Tortoise and the Hare*. We brought these stories to life through lots of exciting cross-curricular activities, from creating our own animal crafts to discovering and identifying our favourite fruits. We've also been getting creative while celebrating Black History Month, exploring the patterns and artwork of Yinka Shonibare. The children enjoyed creating their own colourful patterns while practising their number bonds along the way. Our learning didn't stop in the classroom! During outdoor learning, we ventured into our environment to explore the natural world and discover where different fruits grow. It was wonderful to see the children's curiosity blossom as they investigated the world around them. We've had lots of fun celebrating special events, too! The children showed off their creative flair by designing their own jeans for Jeans for Genes Day and brightened up the classroom by dressing in yellow for Wear It Yellow. As we reach the end of this busy and exciting term, we're looking forward to our Parent Engagement Session, linked to Sensory Week. We can't wait to welcome our parents and carers into Caterpillar Class to explore, discover and enjoy sensory experiences together! A huge well done to all our Caterpillar Class children for a wonderful term full of learning, laughter and growing confidence. We're so proud of you all and can't wait to see what adventures next term brings! 🐛









Butterfly Class: Butterfly Class have had a busy and exciting term exploring our topic, "Fighting Fit". The children have been learning about the human body and different ways to keep healthy. We have also spent time exploring the world around us through visits to our Outdoor Learning area. As the seasons begin to change, the children have enjoyed collecting and investigating autumn treasures such as pine cones, leaves and other natural materials. In maths, we have been developing our understanding of numbers up to 5 and exploring simple patterns through a range of practical and hands-on activities. For example, the children created repeating patterns by printing with different fruits and noticing the sequences they could make. In art, we have been learning about colours and investigating what happens when different colours are mixed together. The children particularly enjoyed creating string art by dipping string into paint and pulling it across paper to make colourful patterns and designs. They have also enjoyed experimenting with mixing paints to discover new colours. Our focus stories this term have been *The Hare and the Tortoise* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. These books have inspired a variety of learning activities and helped to develop the children's enjoyment of stories, songs and sensory experiences.











Ocean Class: We have had so much fun in Ocean Class this half term! The children have settled well into their daily routines and have enjoyed getting to know their adults and friends in Ocean Class. We've been practising communicating together, using our symbols and Grid to choose activities and ask for more of our favourites. We have enjoyed exploring all the amazing spaces around the school, especially the bubble room and soft play. Our music lessons have been lots of fun too, with opportunities to try different instruments and make music together! We have also been trekking through the rainforest with our story, *Monkey Puzzle*. The children have enjoyed sharing books with their adults, creating colourful parrot collages, painting butterflies and stomping like elephants. As autumn has arrived, we've been collecting leaves and using them to create artwork. There has been plenty to keep us busy, and we're looking forward to more fun together next half term!

Forest Class: This term in forest class we have hall been spending time getting to know one another, finding out what we like to do at school One of our topics was habitats, we really enjoyed some sensory play around oceans, and the animals that live in them. We have been cooking too enjoyed making fruit salad. In maths we have been looking at sorting items by size We have been practicing out find motor skills with drawing sticking and play dough . We made beautiful rangoli patterns to celebrate Diwali, using lots and lots of glitter.

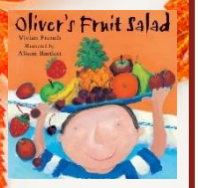




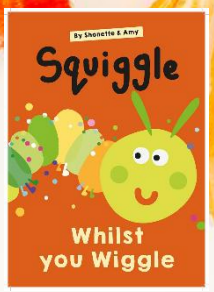






Adventure



Beetle Class: Beetle class have settled well into their new class and pathway and have been busy becoming familiar with their peers, class staff and routines. Our topic this term is 'Fighting Fit' which has involved learning about being healthy, doing exercise and looking after ourselves. Beetle class have enjoyed the stories we have read, especially 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and 'From Head to Toe.' Within phonics, the children have been participating in activities tailored to their learning and ability. In maths, we have been doing lots of counting and number activities and we have been learning about shapes, size and filing and emptying.
Beetle class have been learning about Black History Month and made a handprint poster and have learnt about local famous people. Beetle class enjoyed sensory week and explored different tactile materials and activities.

Grasshopper Class: The children have settled in nicely to their new class now and are working hard on their new routines! They have been very busy this half term doing lots of exciting things. In Literacy we read the stories of 'The hungry caterpillar', 'Head to Toe' and 'Olivers fruit salad'. These are for the topic 'Fighting Fit' which is all about healthy eating and healthy bodies. We enjoyed naming and matching fruits, we learnt about our different body parts, we talked about animals and their babies and made some fantastic playdough caterpillars. We have done lots of dancing with scarves to get our muscles strong with big shoulder and arm movements in our 'Squiggle whilst you wiggle' sessions – we have then been practicing these movements on big paper on the floor (circles and lines). This is really great for developing early writing skills. In maths we have been counting / number correspondence and looking at 2d shapes and have begun exploring patterns.













Lion Class: Lion class have settled well into their new class and have enjoyed getting to know their new peers and teachers. We are so proud of how well they are doing and we have enjoyed getting to know their wonderful personalities. Lion class have been incorporating work on our communication targets into our daily sessions and we have been practising our waiting, turn-taking skills and sharing space and toys with our classmates. Lion class have enjoyed sharing reading books with their adults, working on their phonics in 1:1 sessions and developing their fine motor skills. In Maths we have been sorting 2D shapes, practising our counting forward and backwards and thinking about more and less. Lion class particularly enjoy their Muga trampolining sessions and visiting the soft play and bubble rooms. In cooking this term we have made chicken fajitas, elephant ear pastry's and nachos, we have been trying to encourage children to tolerate touching and tasting new foods. We are working on developing the children's independence and encouraging them to put on their own socks, shoes and coats.

Fox Class: The children in Fox Class have had a wonderful first half of the autumn term! They have settled well into their new classes and are developing positive relationships with the adults who support them. It has been lovely to see them becoming increasingly comfortable and confident in their new learning environments. To support the children with their transition into school each morning, we have introduced sensory circuits. These provide opportunities for movement and sensory activities, helping the children to regulate following their journey to school and prepare for a successful day of learning. In **Science**, we have been exploring the topic of *Habitats*. The children have enjoyed looking at photographs of their own homes and discussing the different places where people and animals live. We have explored a variety of animal habitats and considered how these provide the things animals need to survive. In **Geography**, our learning has focused on *The World Around Us*. The children have been introduced to different countries and their flags, developing their understanding of the world and the diversity of places and cultures within it. The children have enjoyed cooking sessions, they have practised skills such are chopping, rolling, folding as well as being safe around appliances. We also enjoyed taking part in **Hello Yellow**, an annual campaign organised by Young Minds to raise awareness of children's and young people's mental health. The children looked fantastic wearing yellow in support of World Mental Health Day, helping us to promote the importance of mental health and wellbeing. We are incredibly proud of how well the children have settled into the new term and look forward to all the exciting learning opportunities that the next half-term will bring.







Elm Class: Elm class have had a busy start to the academic year but have settled well into their new routines and built strong relationships with adults and children within their new class. Within phonics, the children have completed phonics assessments, and their learning and groupings have been tailored to pitch the learning appropriately. Within mathematics, children have been making numbers up to fifty, partitioning 2-digit numbers and finding missing numbers on a number line.E lm class have thoroughly enjoyed and engaged in class speech and language sessions, where children have been working on requesting, sentence construction, extending vocabulary and using colourful semantics. We have created a class 'tuck shop' where children apply their communication targets to 'order' snacks from a 'symbol menu,' at a class 'cafe' and exchange a set amount of money based upon their individual number targets. Within turn taking sessions, the children have thoroughly enjoyed engaging in Attention Autism shared attention activities, and then moving on to small group turn taking games targeting their individual needs, including Pig Goes Pop, Connect Four, Hungry Hippos and Pop up Pirate.

Pine Class: We have been busy for our first term in Pine Class and the children have settled well and have been eager to take part in the learning . Our topic this half term has been Rainforest Explorers. We have had a class sensory story about a journey through the rainforest and what we found during our exploration. The children have been labelling settings and describing animals. We have also used materials to create some of the characters in the story. In Maths the children have been learning about place value by ordering and finding missing numbers. We have also been learning about 2D shapes we have been identifying common 2D shapes, counting how many sides they have and using them to create shape pictures and patterns. The children in Year 4 have been enjoying swimming lessons where they have been using floats and kicking their legs to help them to move their bodies in the water. In Science we have been creating habitats and finding out which animals live in each habitat. We have also been learning about animal homes and matching animals to their homes. In Art we have been creating self-portraits in the style of a variety of different artists. We used techniques such as collage, wax resist and different types of paint. We also enjoyed taking selfies of ourselves and creating a frame to put our selfie picture in. We have enjoyed our first half term in Pine Class. Have a wonderful half term break!












Oak Class: The children have settled into Oak Class well and embracing the routines. It has been quite a busy and productive half term. This term, our topic is "*Marvellous Mexico!*" and focus texts were 'Off We Go to Mexico'; 'Cuckoo': A Mexican Folktale and 'The Rain Player'. The children had fun listening to the stories as they explored the props. We answered questions based on our stories, described the main characters and used symbols to support our SVO/SVOP/SVOPT reading and writing about events in our stories which helps develop our language sentence formation. In Mathematics, we revisited and extended our value of and patterns in numbers, using a range of manipulatives to solve additions, number bonds, subitising numbers. We also learned about shapes, both 2 and 3 dimensional shapes, identifying them in our environment and linked this with our Art focus on Joan Miro, using 2D shapes to make figures. we also made our Great Oak tree using oak leaves, straws and handprints. In Geography, we learned quite a bit about Mexico. We used both google earth and atlas to locate Mexico. We learned about the culture, celebration, clothing food, animals, plants and range of climate. We made our sombreros and piñata. The children enjoyed having a taste of Mexico as we had some food items (avocado, tortilla chips and wraps, salsa, cheese) from Mexico. Also, in Cooking we made nachos and chicken fajitas. In Science, we learned about living things and their habitats focussing on plants that grow and animals that live in Mexico and UK. In PSHE, we did our class charter, being a role model, learned about UNICEF's Rights of the Child, understanding our basic rights and made a tree to show our rights. In RE, we learned about different celebrations and we focussed on Sukkot – the Jewish harvest festival.

Valley Class: Valley Class have had a great start to the academic year, with all the children settling well into their new routines and getting to know each other and the team. We have been learning about Marvellous Mexico this half term, we enjoyed listening to the Mexican story of the Cuckoo, retelling it, writing descriptive sentences and answering comprehension questions about it, really well. We learnt about places in Mexico, Mexican traditions and food and made Mexican flags. In Science we learnt about animals you find in Mexico and in England. We really enjoyed finding out about hedgehogs, where they live, what they eat and their unique special features. During our art sessions we have learnt about Joan Miro and we 'Took a line for a walk', making our own versions of the painting. During PE we've been practising our tennis skills in the Muga and enjoying the new trampolines. In maths we've been focusing on 2D and 3D shapes, we've been going around school and seeing which shapes we can find. We have learnt about place value, addition, subtraction and money. We have also been continuing with our handwriting, spelling and reading lessons and have made good progress in our phonics sessions. We have also joined in well with our cooking this term and made tasty tacos, fajitas and fruit salad. It has been a busy but fun term, and we have really worked hard.









Willow Class: Our topic for this term is Marvellous Mexico!

In English we explored a range of exciting stories linked to our topic, including Off We Go to Mexico, Cuckoo: A Mexican Folktale and The Rain Player. The children enjoyed listening to the stories, identifying the main characters and talking about the events that took place. They used props and symbols to help them retell the stories in their own words. We also developed our descriptive language by completing SVOP (Subject, Verb, Object and Place) descriptions of pictures from the stories, helping the children to build their vocabulary and form meaningful sentences.

The children also took part in daily phonics lessons using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. These sessions supported their developing knowledge of letter sounds, blending and segmenting words, and applying their phonics skills to reading and writing.

In Mathematics, the children explored number sequences and practised counting and recognising patterns in numbers. We developed our understanding of subitising recognising how many objects there are without counting them individually. The children also investigated number bonds and practised simple addition, using practical resources and activities to help them understand how numbers can be combined.

In Geometry, we revisited both 2D and 3D shapes, exploring their names, properties and features. The children had opportunities to identify shapes in their surroundings and discuss what makes each shape different.

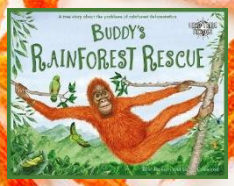
Our topic gave the children the opportunity to discover more about the country of Mexico. We learnt where Mexico is located in the world and explored its national flag, traditional clothing and popular foods. The children used paper cups and plates to design and create their own 3D models of Mexican sombreros.

In Science, our learning focused on habitats and the different environments in which plants and animals live. The children investigated a variety of habitats, with a particular focus on the spider monkey and the plants found in Mexico. We discussed how living things depend on their surroundings to meet their needs and explored how different plants and animals are suited to their habitats.

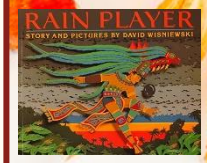
In RE, we explored the journey through life, looking at the different stages people experience as they grow and develop. The children learnt about significant celebrations and milestones, from birth through to adulthood, and discussed how people and families mark important occasions.

During PSHE, we worked together to create our class charter, discussing the importance of kindness, respect, and making our classroom a happy and safe place for everyone. The children reflected on the things they are good at and identified skills they would like to develop further during the academic year. We also learnt about UNICEF's Rights of the Child, exploring children's rights and discussing why it is important that every child is treated fairly, feels safe and has opportunities to learn and thrive.

In Art, we explored the work of the artist Joan Miró, looking at his use of colour, shapes, lines and imaginative forms. The children created their own pieces of artwork inspired by his style, experimenting with different artistic techniques and expressing their ideas creativity.



Challenge



Giraffe Class: Giraffe class has really settled in well and have been enjoying the Rainforest topic. The children have learnt the names of the different layers of the Rainforest with the help of a rather catchy song that they have sung in each Science lesson. The class have learnt about the animals that live in each of the Rainforest layers as well as some of the plants and trees. We have also found out which countries Rainforests can be found in and coloured these on a world map. The class have enjoyed reading the class stories - 'Monkey Puzzle', 'Buddys Rainforest Adventure' and 'The Sloth that couldn't run'; the children have done associated comprehension and sentence work and enjoyed acting out and taking turns to read a page of each book. In Maths the children have spent time learning about place value and general number work and have used the dienes to work out how many tens and ones different numbers have. The class have also spent time learning about 2D and 3D shapes and their properties. They have also enjoyed continuing repeating patterns using 2D shapes and colours. The children have been learning about keeping safe in the home in their PSHE lessons and are very aware of possible dangers when shown pictures. In R.E. the children have learnt about 'belonging' and were all able to identify what groups and places they each belong to.

The class all helped to think about rules for the class as well as Unicefs Rights list to help think about what their rights are when they are at school, the children helped to make a Class Charter for the classroom. The class have really enjoyed the cooking lessons and making all the delicious recipes, we have some budding chefs in our midst! All the children have worked hard this term and we are proud of them all!

Zebra Class: We've really enjoyed settling in, meeting our new friends and forming great bonds in Zebra Class. We've understood the class expectation and thrived in a relaxed and secured environment. In English our Rainforest theme saw us reading Monkey puzzle, we explored the different characters, emotions and did some great writing. The Rainforest theme continued in Science and Geography. We looked at the Amazon Rainforest and the Congo Rainforest. Zebra class learnt about the different animals, the climate and the environment. They were fascinated to develop new language such as equator, habitat and camouflage and to see the vast variety of animals and birds. In Maths we looked at different 2D and 3D shapes. We focused on their properties and learnt key vocabulary such as vertices and dimension.

We're really excited to continue working hard in Zebra class and see what else the year brings.

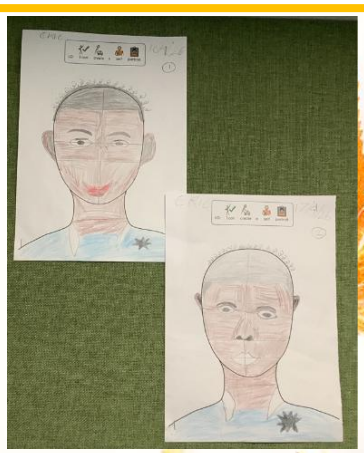
River Class: As we come to the end of a wonderful term, we would like to share some of the fantastic learning that has taken place in our classroom. Our topic of Mexico has provided many exciting opportunities for both fun and learning across the curriculum. In Literacy, we enjoyed studying *Off to Mexico*, *Rain Player* and *Cuckoo*. Through these texts, the children developed their reading and comprehension skills and produced some excellent pieces of writing. We created persuasive adverts and informative fact files about Mexico, focusing on the effective use of adjectives to engage the reader. The children also planned and wrote their own Mayan myths, carefully considering the sequence of events and key features needed to create an exciting story. Our topic work helped us learn about the history and geography of Mexico, and we even explored some Spanish, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. In Science, we have been learning about living things, habitats and food chains. One of the highlights was visiting the outdoor learning area for a frog hunt, where the children had the opportunity to observe habitats and living creatures first-hand. In Art, we explored self-portraits and studied the work of Joan Miró. The children then created their own pieces inspired by his unique and imaginative style, producing some wonderful artwork. In RE, we have been learning about rites of passage and how important life events and celebrations are marked in different traditions. The children also reflected on significant milestones in their own lives. In Maths, we have enjoyed a range of interactive and practical activities. A particular highlight was a tower-building competition with Lake Class, which helped develop our understanding of measures, height and length while encouraging teamwork and problem-solving. It has been a fantastic start to the year, and we are incredibly proud of all that the children have achieved. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to building on this success and enjoying many more exciting learning opportunities throughout the rest of the year.

Lake Class: Lake Class have had a fantastic start to the academic year. This term week have been focussing our learning on our topic 'Marvellous Mexico'. The children have taken part in a wide range of experiences to enhance their understanding of Mexico by learning about its food, historical architecture, places of interest, music and culture. In addition, they have had experience of cooking dishes such as tacos, fajitas and cinnamon rolls; which they thorough enjoyed making and eating. We have enjoyed listening to and completing activities based on our featured texts of 'Off We Go to Mexico' and 'the Rain Player' and 'Cuckoo'. As a part of our English lessons the children have had experience of describing characters and settings, creating story maps and writing their own Mayan inspired stories. In Maths, we have undertaken several mathematical themes such as place value, shapes, addition, number bonds and currently we are focussing our learning on measures. In Geography we have been learning about different aspects of life in Mexico and compared it to United Kingdom. The children were asked to think about what they would need to travel to Mexico and what landmarks they would see during their travels. In Art, we looked at the Surrealist Artist – Joan Miro.

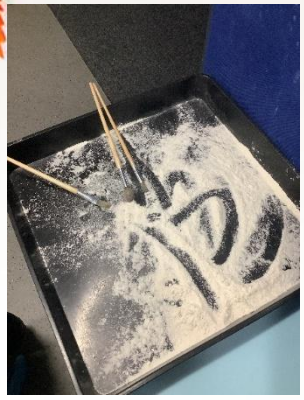


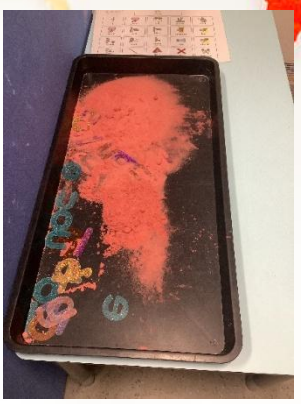






Sensory Week: St. Nicholas school have celebrated Sensory week again this year and have had lots of fun! The children have explored different activities such as wet and dry cornflour, foam, rice, lentils, flour, pasta and lots of other materials. The children have also explored different activities within their learning such as sensory Maths, sensory writing activities and Attention Autism activities. These activities have encouraged the children to use their different senses and celebrate different sensory needs and how we are all different in how we learn and regulate.












Celebration Assemblies: Over the course of the half term, all of the children have enjoyed taking part in our Star of the Week Assemblies. This is where we celebrate the wonderful learning that the children are doing and the progress that they are making. Being in assembly also allows our children to come together as a school community reinforcing that they belong and are valued members of the school, which supports their social and emotional development. In our Key Stage 1 assembly today, the children all joined together to dance together at the end. A wonderful moment of coming together and belonging.




Thank you for reading our half term newsletter. I hope you have enjoyed reading all of the different news from the different classes and events we have had going on. It was lovely seeing so many parents arrive Have a safe half term break. Looking forward to seeing all of our children on Monday 2nd November.

Many Thanks

Katie