



Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been another busy half term with lots of great learning taking place and pupils enjoying their time back in school. Thank you once again for your continued support with the measures we have put in place, please remember they are there to keep all of us safe.

We are continuing to have a big push on attendance and would like you to support us with ensuring your child is in school everyday, unless there is a valid reason. Remember our school attendance target is 96%

This half term, the pupils have been busy working hard with catch up learning as well as taking part in new and exciting learning. The newsletter will give you a glimpse of some of the fantastic learning that has taken place.

We are already looking forward to Summer 2 as we prepare to finish off the year with a host of activities and experiences to help enrich pupils learning. Including: Year 5 Bikeability, Culture Day, Year 6 Precious lives workshops and Arts Week.

We will break up on Friday 28th May. We hope you enjoy the half term break with your children and look forward to seeing all pupils back in school on the Monday 7th of June

Kind Regards

Mr Riaz (Associate Principal), Mrs Majid and Mr Ahmad (Assistant Principals).



Starbank's Zen Garden



Earlier in the Year, Starbank School took part in the National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of Britain's first national lockdown. As a way to honour this occasion, our site has decided to develop part of our outdoor space in order to produce a reflection garden. This will be a way for both children and staff to create a lasting legacy in school to recognise the nation's collective loss, support those who've been bereaved and hope for a brighter future. For our pupils, it will provide a calm, reflective space for the children to relax and unwind during break and lunch times.

In recent weeks, some members of staff have begun to overhaul this space. Though it remains an ongoing project, some big changes are already underway. Screening and solar lights have been put up and the reception shed has been painted with bright stars. Most importantly, the children created some wonderful bunting, mobiles and divas to decorate this space. We hope you like the transformation so far and we're excited to share the final results with you in the coming months.

Nursery's farm visit

Nursery have been learning all about farms and farming. We have learnt which animals live on the farm and even had the opportunity to visit some of them in our very own 'Starbank Nursery Farm'. Children especially enjoyed feeding the ducks and the lamb. The children learnt about where we get eggs, milk, meat and dairy products from. We set up a farm shop and wrote shopping lists to help us remember the items we need to buy from the shop.

In our construction area, we have been busy building farms and enclosures for the animals to live in. In addition, we have been using maths to help us understand the number of animals living in each farm and how big it need to be to fit them all in.



Reception are dinosaur experts!

Reception have had another exciting fun-filled half term! In English and Topic, pupils have been reading books and learning lots of facts about dinosaurs. After learning about dinosaurs, they have been writing dinosaur descriptions in their English books.

Pupils have thoroughly enjoyed their dinosaur topic and are now experts in all things dinosaur related. Shan Bansal has helped them create their very own dinosaur radio show; please look out for a link to our radio show on our website.

During Maths pupils have been working really hard on problem solving using addition and subtraction.



Year One are performers

Year one have had the exciting opportunity of working alongside practitioners from the Birmingham Hippodrome. We have explored the Julia Donaldson story 'What the Ladybird heard' through a series of drama sessions. The children have taken on the roles of the different characters and discussed how their feelings change throughout the story. These drama sessions, along with recording a feature for the school radio station, have developed the children's literacy and performance skills. It has been fantastic to see the children's enthusiasm and watch their confidence grow.

Through their geography topic, the children have been on a trip around the Earth. They have learnt the names of the continents and oceans, and have had the chance to find out lots of facts about Europe, Antarctica, Africa, and Asia. One of our favourite facts was that Antarctica is a desert because it has very little rain fall. Can you find out some more exciting facts to share with your teachers?

Year Two travel to Kenya

Year 2 have travelled across the world in their learning... to Kenya! Pupils have been discovering where Kenya is located and what the climate is like there. We even identified similarities and differences between life in rural Kenya and life in the UK! The children in Year 2 have worked incredibly hard in their Topic work this half term and we have been so impressed by how fascinated and enthusiastic they have all been to discover more about Kenya. Here are some interesting facts we've learnt:

Did you know that children in rural Kenya wake up early to collect water? They carry the water back home by balancing the heavy containers on their heads!

Kenya is near the equator so it is very hot. The hottest months in Kenya are February and March.

Houses in rural Kenya have mud walls. They have one room and the roof is made from thatched grass. The family sleep on mats on the floor.

Children in Kenya like some of the same things as we do. They learn maths and English at school, and they play football at playtime.



Year Three are animators

Year 3 have been very busy making connections between both Computing and Topic! Pupils have been using Scratch within this unit to create a simple animation linking to our Topic of Mountains and Volcanoes. They were able to combine graphics, text and sound to code our animation using Scratch. Pupils did well to sequence their instructions using blocks of scripts.

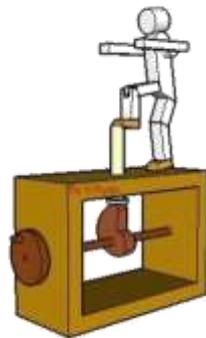


Pupils were also able to use Paint to support them with creating their backgrounds. These skills were then transferred in to creating their backdrops in scratch and using a Sprite to help relay wonderful facts on volcanoes to their audience. Pupils also learnt to debug so that their animations worked well and without problems.



Year Four are toy designers

Year 4 have looked at the amazing world of mechanisms! They have recognised different types of movement, learnt how mechanisms can be used with a lever or slider follower to produce different types of movement and have designed and made a moving toy using a cam board. Year 4 enjoyed their D.T day, where they got to make their toys using lots of different equipment-they are now design and technology wizards, especially when it comes to mechanisms!



Year Six are geneticists

Year 6 have been exploring Evolution and Inheritance for Science. Year 6 learnt all about pioneers in this field including the famous Charles Darwin and Mary Anning to help them understand some of the science behind evolution.

To begin, pupils learnt about different types of fossils which were formed millions of years ago. This topic helps us to recognise that living things have changed over time and fossils provide information about plants and animals that once inhabited earth. 6R and 6K even had a go at making imprint fossils in class using plaster to represent the mould and shells to create imprints.



As part of this topic, pupils also looked at genetics and inherited traits to recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents. In order to test this, children bought in pictures of their relatives and compared genetic (inherited) factors, looked at variation and what features were environmental.

Finally, year 6 had the opportunity to explore animal adaptations and how, over millions of years, animals have adapted their bodies to suit their habitats.

It was really fascinating animal adaptation facts such as the following:

Did you know polar bears have black skin under their fur?

- This helps keep in warmth to regulate body temperature in their icy habitats.



Did you know camels have thick, rubbery lips?

- This helps them chew prickly cacti in the desert without hurting themselves.

Year Five are experimenting

In Science this half term, Year 5 have completed lots of experiments exploring materials and their properties. In one lesson, we investigated the absorbency of materials and discussed why absorbency can be both a benefit and a hindrance, depending on the purpose. After that, we planned and conducted an experiment to find out how soluble different substances were.

"I really enjoy doing practical experiments, using the science equipment and solving problems that will help in real life." - Aiden K (5ES)





Art Week - Monday 5th July – Friday 9th July "The Wonder of Colour"

Pupils and staff are really looking forward to Art Week which will be taking place between Monday 5th July and Friday 9th July. Our focus for art week this year will be "The Wonder of Colour". Each year group will be studying a particular colour and they will learn about a famous artwork associated with their colour.

Pupils will have an opportunity to explore the colour wheel, learn about tints, tones and shades, and they will have opportunities to explore a range of materials. The week's learning will culminate in the creation of an artwork inspired by the focus colour and the focus art skill.

We know the pupils will have a fantastic time exploring colour and we really look forward to seeing the creative outcomes our pupils create!

Rocket Radio

"It has been a Rocket Radio frenzy recently with pupils from all three sites showcasing their presenting skills in brand new radio shows and features. Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, the school radio studios are temporarily off limits to the children, but it hasn't stopped us from recording brilliant new content in our classrooms!

Some of the recent Rocket Radio highlights have been "The Dinosaurs Report" by Reception, "A Tale of Two Beasts" story retelling by Year 2 with a focus on perspectives; "The Truth about Vikings" by Year 3, and the infamous "The Highway Man" poem dramatically performed with an alternative ending by Year 5.

All our current and previous Rocket Radio/iStarTV shows are available to enjoy on our school webpage:

<https://www.starbankschool.co.uk/about-us/istartv/>

Mental Health and Well Being

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

We continue to place great importance on our pupils' mental health. During lockdown we dedicated additional time to wellbeing and made sure this remained in place when pupils returned to school. Pupils were given tailored lessons depending on their lockdown experience. We can see an increasing confidence in pupils sharing what good mental health looks like and how to achieve this. Please encourage your child to continue using mindfulness and relaxation activities as one way to support them.

We have put together a list of useful websites and contacts on the school website:

<https://www.starbankschool.co.uk/information/emotional-health-well-being/>

You will find:

- Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing policy
- Who you can speak to
- Supporting your child during coronavirus
- Mindfulness and relaxation activities
- Support your own wellbeing
- Reporting domestic abuse
- Useful links

Birmingham Hippodrome projects

This half term, Charlotte Boyer, our Hippodrome practitioner has been working with Year 1 and Year 4!

Year 1 have been looking at the story 'What the Ladybird Heard' by Julia Donaldson. The story is set on a farmyard full of noise, but when Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len hatch a plot to steal the fine prize cow, it's the quietest animal of all who saves the day! We have been exploring the farm, the farm animals and our villains Hefty Hue and Lanky Len through Drama skills such as still image, mime and role play and dance. Year 1 have had such a good time exploring the story practically, well done Year 1!

Year 4 have been working on the project 'Celebrate' a virtual end of year celebration. At the end of every academic year we have pupils from all across the HEN (Hippodrome Education Network) network come into the building and showcase work they have done throughout the year. Unfortunately, that is not possible this year so pupils are learning and recording 'Celebrate' by Craig Randle. A song that acknowledges the hardships of the last year, thanking those that have been there for us and celebrating the end of this trying time. Year 4 will feature in a video with other schools from the HEN network that will be released at the end of the academic year, watch this space!

