



January 12th 2024

Around School

At the start of each half term, I like to share some information on the topics the children will be working on for the next few weeks. Please see below.

Nursery

Nursery class have started the term off with a ROAR! Their new theme is all about dinosaurs and their focused story has been 'Dinosaur Roar'. They have been talking about what they already know about dinosaurs and learning new facts using non-fiction books. In the sensory tray nursery children have been exploring soap flake slime; which has created lots of awe and wonder moments and the children have been highly engaged. As the week progressed, they turned the tray into a swamp and added small world and natural resources to enhance play. Next week, they will take on the role of Palaeontologists and will dig for bones and explore fossils.

Reception

This week we have started our 'People Who Help Us' topic, with a focus on Doctors and Nurses. We have been reading 'Zog and the Flying Doctors' and have been creating our own story map. We have also learned about how we can stay healthy, thinking about looking after ourselves and how we can prevent germs from spreading. We have competed a 'germ hunt' in class and used paint to see how easily germs can spread. We have enjoyed our role play 'Doctors Surgery' and have treated various ailments and have explored some x-ray images and different medical equipment. In PE, we have also started a new unit on throwing and catching and we were very impressed with the children's throwing and catching ability.

Year 1

In Geography and History we are investigating farming, looking at how farms have changed over time and the geography of a farm. Children now know three different farms: arable, livestock and dairy, and can distinguish between what different farms produce. In English, we are reading Farmer Duck which is all about a very hardworking duck and a very lazy farmer! Children will use their prediction skills to write the ending of the story. In Computing we have been looking at internet safety, specifically what information can and cannot be shared online and how information stays on the internet for a very long time! In Science we have drawn around ourselves and labelled all of our different body parts.

Year 2

We have had a very busy week in year 2! The children are really enjoying listening to our class text, 'The Railway Children.' In PE we began our gymnastics unit, starting with practising our balancing and coordination skills. In Science, we have started exploring everyday materials, discussing the properties of the materials and how this makes them fit for purpose. In Outdoor Learning we enjoyed a scavenger hunt around the school grounds – the children worked collaboratively as they investigated lots of different textures.

Year 3

Year 3 have been developing our skills ready to write an instructional text next week on How to wash a Woolly Mammoth! We have been building on our multiplication and division skills in maths. In Science, we have started to explore our new topic of 'Rocks' by looking at their properties and comparing them. In Geography, we have identified Countries and counties of the UK. We are learning about the Stone Age in History and have developed some historical enquiry questions to

explore. In French we have been learning how to say different parts of the body - go and ask them! And finally in Outdoor Learning we have started preparing the beds for the growing season. What a busy week...

Year 4

What a great week Year 4 have had! We have enjoyed learning about Ancient Greece in History which has linked to our Oracy unit where the children turned into interviewers and experts, sharing their knowledge about where the Ancients Greeks lived, what they ate and where they lived. Back to modern day, and in Geography we have looked at where Greece is in the world, exploring the physical features from studying an atlas. Our new electricity unit in Science has been popular, with much excitement about building electrical circuits next week. PE has been a chance to relax and strengthen our bodies through a series of yoga poses which was followed by Outdoor Learning, completing a scavenger hunt set out by our friends. Finally, we must not forget our exciting brass lesson where we were focussing on note reading to play 'Smoke on the Water' as an ensemble.

Year 5

We have been busy completing our bird houses in D&T. They look amazing and have met the needs of our design criteria. In RE, we have been learning about different religions and which festivals they celebrate. Our speaking and listening task has been to explain when and how we dial 999 in an emergency and we have really enjoyed finding out about the topic of First Aid and Emergencies. In Geography, we have been using our skills to compare maps of prehistoric and Roman Britain. In maths, we are learning how to multiply numbers using different methods.

Year 6

This week we have started to explore our 'Medicine through time' topic in both history and oracy. We have made some historical enquiries, as well as researching significant individuals who have contributed to medical advancement and placing them on a timeline with the time periods we have studied so far. In oracy, we have started to build up our skills ready to perform a historical sketch based on medicine in the middle ages. In literacy, we have finished reading "Why The Whales Came" by Michael Morpurgo and built up our skills towards writing a newspaper report on the main event of the story. In Geography, we have started our topic on Peru by looking at where Peru is located in the world and considering the main geographical regions of Brazil as well as their physical features.

Eco News

This week we received 8 silver birch trees which were from a successful grant application. These trees are much bigger than the whips we planted last year and will hopefully grow more successfully. Eco Committee will help to plant these around the perimeter of the field which will help provide both shade and habitats in the future. Planting will have to wait until after next week's possible snow!

School Council

School council will meet each Monday from next week to look at resources we can purchase for playtimes. I look forward to receiving their wish list!

Mini Medics

We were sorry to have to postpone the Mini Medics session for a week. The session is rearranged for Tuesday 16th January from 3-5pm.

Sports

This week saw our first sporting competition of 2024. These are events where children compete against other children from local schools and have the opportunity to progress to further rounds (against schools throughout the county), with the competition becoming tougher each round. The last one was the Cross Country which our strong runners found very tough! Unfortunately, these events can only accommodate a set number of children so the organisers can run the event efficiently. For example, we have 50 children in Y5/6 and there were only 20 places available for

Sports Hall Athletics this week. Events are often cross year groups or whole key stages as many of the smaller rural schools have mixed aged classes. Miss Richardson, the coaches and class teachers decide on the children who are selected for the competitions based on their observations of a child's ability and effort so they can be competitive when they arrive at the competition. Sometimes children may be disappointed to have not been selected and we will ensure that the children of those classes do some sport when some of their classmates are at the competitions.

There are also sporting festivals which the whole class attend. These are scattered throughout the year and are not restricted by numbers. We try to attend every event open to us as we value the importance of physical exercise on health and wellbeing.

We are trying to build pathways for children to try sports at our after-school provision which they can explore at local clubs. We have had football and rugby in the Autumn term and this half term have cricket club. There are good local clubs for children of different ages in town, if your child shows a particular interest. If you have any contacts with other local sports clubs or if you would like to suggest other sports for us to consider, please let me know.

Sports Hall Athletics

In today's competition the children took part in a mixture of track and field events. Everyone worked hard and competed well. There were some successes too with Year 6 girls winning the relay event and Wallace (Y5) and William (Y6) winning the 6 lap paarluuf race. Well done to all of the team!

Reception School Places

The window for applying for school places for Reception places closes on January 15th. Applications submitted after this date will be classed as a late application. To apply, please visit [here](#). Once on the site, you can apply online through the Parent Portal or if you prefer a paper application please contact Durham School Admissions on 03000265896. This process applies to children who attend our nursery already too.

Attendance

Below is a summary of attendance for this week.

Class	Attendance (%)
Reception	97.6
Year 1	97.3
Year 2	94.7
Year 3	98.7
Year 4	96.7
Year 5	96.2
Year 6	94.6
Whole School %	96.6

Dates for the Diary

January 16 th	Rearranged Mini Medics parent/child session (fully booked)
January 19 th	Reception and Y1 dental checks
January 26 th	KS2 Swimming Gala (selected children)
February 6 th	Safer Internet Day
February 12 th and 13 th	Parents' Evenings
February 14 th	Year 5 Netball tournament
February 13 th -16 th	Valentine Discos
February 19 th -23 rd	Half Term
February 24 th	Children return to school
March 13 th and 14 th	Year 3 and 4 School Play
March 15 th	Comic Relief
March 20 th	Year 2 Football at Staindrop

March 22nd
March 27th
April 1st – April 12th

Selected Y5/6 Girls Football
Y3/4 Orienteering
Easter Holidays

Mr. C Minikin
Head Teacher

Please see the QR code for the School Lottery. The more players we have, the more we raise for the school and the bigger the prize fund.

