Icknield Infants' WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

October 2026

• BRAVE ✦ CURIOUS ◆ TEAMWORK • FOCUS

A WORD FROM MRS SQUIRES

The weather has been so changeable this week, from bright autumnal sunshine to pouring rain, but we have never let it dampen our spirits at school! As an OPAL school, we go out to play no matter what the weather, so please do provide wellies and coats for your children to protect their clothes. Much fun was had earlier this week playing in puddles, and it impacts so positively on behaviour when children are not cooped up inside and get their daily dose of fresh air!

This morning, we had our next No Outsiders story assembly – 'Someone Just Like You' by David Roberts. The book focuses on similarities and differences, discusses feeling left out and how to empathise and support others. We discussed together and in partners some questions such as *can you think of someone who seems different to you in one way but similar to you in another*? *Why is it important to think about how others may be feeling*? We then discussed how this linked to our motto and school values. Children reflected on how they could make others feel included and we agreed that if everyone showed kindness to make others feel included we would have a very happy school indeed.

This week, the classes who have won the attendance bears for the greatest number of children coming to school every day, on time are Caterpillar and Fox again! Congratulations to these classes – both are well over the government targets of 96% attendance and they the bears remain in their classes this afternoon!

Please note there will be a new club next half term, as Drawing Club has now finished. Thank you to Miss Yates for running it this half term. The school-run club for next term will be **choir**. It will run from Monday 16th November - Monday 14th December. It will be 3.20pm-4.15pm and collection will be from the main red gates.

School Gateway will be open from Monday 26th October - Monday 9th November for parents to sign their children up and an email will be sent after the 9th November to confirm if your child has been allocated a place

Today was the last day of the half term. Next week is the half term break. I hope, like me, this will be an opportunity for you to spend time with loved ones and enjoy life at a slower pace. I look forward to welcoming back all our families on Monday 2nd November. Please see the dates section for some of the events we have planned for next term. I wish you all a relaxing week.

THIS WEEK AT ICKNIELD

STAFF PROFILE



My name is Miss Rashid! I am the teacher in Squirrel class. This is my first year of teaching at Icknield, but I was a primary teacher in London for 4 years before arriving here in Letchworth.

At home, I have a daughter and a dog! I absolutely love reading and I enjoy going on long walks with my family.

CELEBRATION CORNER

Please do consider sharing any successes from home to share with the school community. All successes are welcome. You might share any of the following:

- Milestones (no matter how small)
- Showing school values or learning powers
- Arts, sports or music achievements

Every day in Squirrel class starts with dancing, helping the children feel happy, energized and ready for the day ahead!

- Anything that shows going above and beyond e.g. extra learning

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We add new events and dates regularly as we book in trips, visitors, etc., so please check back regularly to make sure you have access to all the dates you need. These can also be found on the school website here.

November

Individual/sibling photos – **Wednesday 4th November**

HCL Bonfire Lunch – **Thursday 5th November**

Children in Need: Crazy Hair Day – **Friday 13th November**

Flu Vaccinations mop up – **Friday 20th November**

Open Evening for Prospective Parents – **Wednesday 25th November 3:30-6:00**

December

EYFS Nativity 1 (time TBC) – **Wednesday 2nd December**

EYFS Nativity 2 (time TBC) – **Thursday 3rd December**

Nursery Walk to the Letterbox – **Thursday 3rd December**

Decorations Day – **Friday 4th December**

PTA Non-uniform day – **Friday 4th December**

Fundraising Toy Sale – **Monday 7th December**

Nursery Singalong – **Wednesday 9th December**

Christmas Jumper Day – **Thursday 10th December**

Reception: Robots Search for Snow – **Thursday 10th December**

iRock concert (time TBC) – **Thursday 10th December**

Christmas Shopping Day – **Friday 11th December**

PTA Christmas Market and Grotto – **Friday 11th December**

TBC PTA Grotto Day 2 – **Monday 14th December**

Christmas Lunch – **Wednesday 16th December**

PTA PJs and movie time TBC – **Friday 18th December**

End of term 1:40p.m. – **Friday 18th December**

Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January – Christmas Holidays, school closed to pupils

Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th January – INSET days, school closed to pupils

SCHOOL STORIES

NO OUTSIDERS



This week in our No Outsiders assembly, we explored the true story of Fiona the sheep, who spent two years living alone at the bottom of a cliff in Scotland before being rescued by a team of farmers. Using Fiona's story, the children discussed what it means to be an outsider, whether being alone is always a bad thing, and how different people can have different views about the same situation.

The children thought carefully about whether Fiona wanted to be rescued and considered the perspectives of the farmers, animal welfare groups and members of the public. It led to some thoughtful conversations about belonging, choice, kindness and respect for different opinions. Interestingly, the children overwhelmingly thought that Fiona should have been left alone on her cliff and that she probably was not happy to be moved!

As always, our No Outsiders work reminded us that everyone sees the world differently, and that listening to and valuing other people's views is an important part of living together in a diverse society.

CHILDREN IN NEED

As you may be aware, next month is **Children in Need**. This year, our theme will be 'Crazy Hair Day.' Children are welcome to wear their own clothes on this day (see *Dates For Your Diary*) and style their hair however they wish – the crazier, the better! Unfortunately, we have not been sent resources for paying cash in so we will be unable to accept any cash donations on the day. You will be able to make donations vie this link: https://donate.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our school council will start up again after half term. This term, the school councillors will be 'Curriculum Leaders.' Their role will include taking part in learning walks, sharing feedback from their peers, helping to agree actions for improvement, and creating video feedback to share with governors.

Following each term, a new group of representatives will be elected. From the spring term onwards, Reception children will also be invited to take part in the election process.

I wrote a letter to all year one and two classes sharing the job description and asked them to hold elections. Elections have taken place and I'm pleased to announce that the councillors for next half term will be:

Squirrel: Dylan and Sienna

Fox: Devsi and Elle

Dolphin: Hendrix and Lyra

Penguin: Dylan and Elia

ATTENDANCE, SAFEGUARDING AND WORKING TOGETHER

At school, keeping children safe and ensuring they receive the very best education go hand in hand. Regular attendance is one of the most important factors in helping children build friendships, develop confidence and make good progress in their learning. Even short periods of absence can mean children miss key learning experiences and routines that are difficult to replicate at home.

Schools have a legal responsibility to monitor attendance and follow up on absences. We are also held accountable for attendance levels, with attendance forming part of inspections and regular discussions with the Local Authority. This means that there are times when we may need to ask questions about a child's absence or seek further information from families.

We understand that some of these conversations can feel personal. Please be assured that our intention is never to pry into family life. Instead, we want to understand whether there are any barriers to attendance and explore what support may be

available. We know that every family's circumstances are different, and we are always keen to work in partnership to find solutions where needed.

There may also be occasions when we carry out a welfare check. This happens when we have concerns that a child or family may be vulnerable, or when we have been unable to establish that everyone is safe and well. These checks are a normal part of our safeguarding responsibilities and are carried out with care and concern for families' wellbeing.

The best way we can support one another is through openness and communication. If your child is experiencing difficulties that may affect their attendance, please let us know. By working together, we can ensure every child is safe, supported and able to thrive.

ROAD SAFETY AND 20mph CONSULTATION

Next half term, we are pleased to welcome representatives from Hertfordshire County Council into school to deliver a **road safety assembly** for our children. This will be a valuable opportunity to reinforce the importance of staying safe when travelling to and from school. As you will know, this is a topic that has caused us much worry in recent months.

Alongside this newsletter, you will find a flyer about a county-wide consultation on 20mph speed limits. Parents and carers are encouraged to complete a short online survey, which takes just a few minutes to complete. The survey closes at midnight on **Sunday 22 November 2026**. You can take part here: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/20mph

Thank you for helping to support safer roads and safer journeys for all members of our community.

PTA & COMMUNITY

A MESSAGE FROM THE PTA CHAIR

Hello to all parents and carers!

First of all, on behalf of the wider team we would like to continue to extend our gratitude to you all for supporting us with all of the events we are putting on for the school; without you we wouldn't be able to function.

Unfortunately, I feel it is important to remind families that the team, including myself, are all working on a voluntary basis so this is just a reminder to be kind and considerate when sending messages.

In addition, it would be really helpful if where possible - the newsletter, Instagram or the chats are checked for up-to-date information on events, payments and deadlines. All of these platforms are used to get the word out as much as possible. Deadlines are needed to ensure we as a team are able to put on the best experience for our children, so please be mindful to observe these.

Lastly, we want every child to be included so if there is ever any concerns regarding payments, deadlines or events in general please don't hesitate to contact your class rep or PTA@icknieldinfants.herts.sch.uk

LOOK WHAT WE'VE BEEN LEARNING!

NURSERY

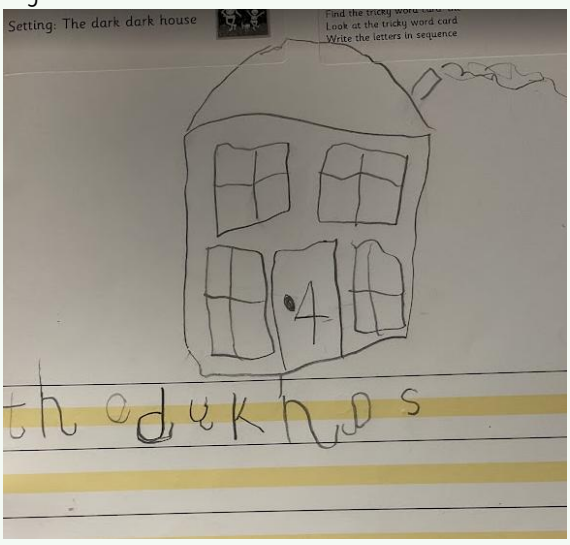
Please see Tapestry for Mrs Maw's weekly update. If children have any interesting play moments, show school values or learning powers, or just want to share something from home with their teacher, please do upload it on Tapestry. Don't worry about lots of text – a simple photo and small caption is perfect!

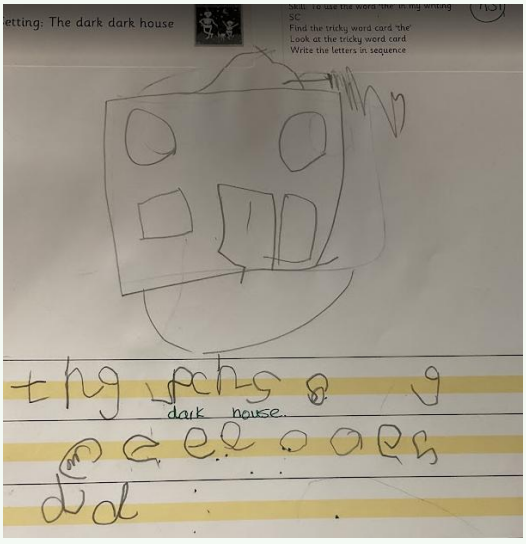
RECEPTION

This week in **Drawing Club** we read the book **'Funnybones' by Janet and Allan Ahlberg.** We spoke with the children about different parts of our body and how our **skull** protects our brain.



The new vocabulary we introduced this week was **frighten, deserted, midnight, wandered and amuse.** Our first session focused on the **character.** The children could draw the Dad, son or dog focusing on the details of the bones and then write a caption using the tricky word **the.** We also drew the setting which was the dark dark house again focusing on using the tricky word **the.**

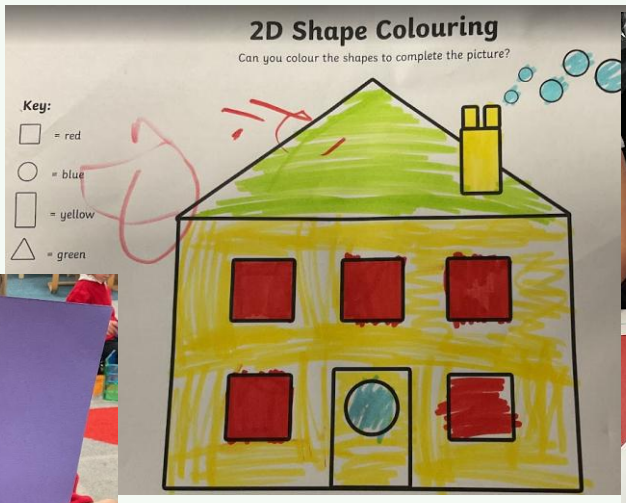




In Maths we introduced **2D shapes.** The children learnt that these shapes are **flat.** We looked at the properties of the above 4 shapes and how they are **similar** or **different** to each other. We used stem sentences, for example **'the triangle has straight sides and the circle has a curved side.'**



The children took part in different activities to consolidate their learning of 2D shapes.







In phonics we have been revisiting our sounds and focusing on blending these together to make words.

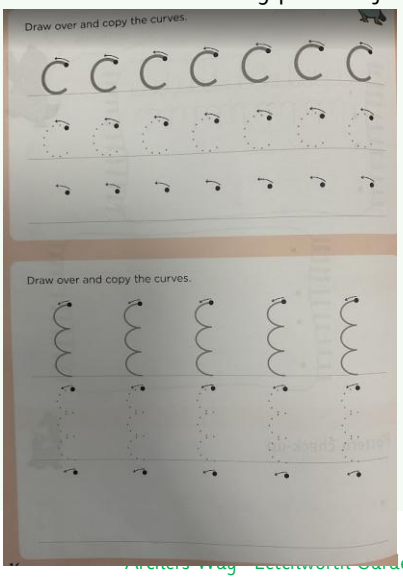
Assessments

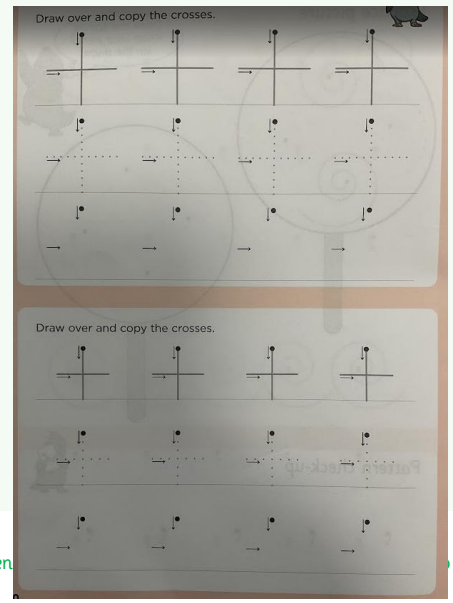
Your child has taken part in their first phonics assessment. A sheet has been added to their home learning packs. The highlighted sounds and words are ones that your child knows. Please focus on the sounds and words that are not highlighted.

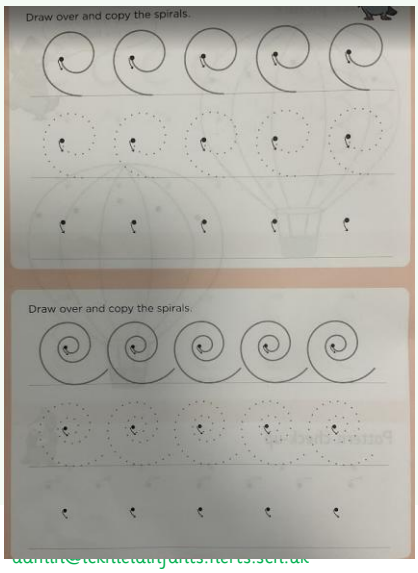
Little Wandle Parent Portal - https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

Handwriting

Below are our handwriting patterns from this week.







Volunteers needed!

In December (Thursday 9th) we will **walking** to the Broadway Gallery to watch **Robot's Search for Snow.** We will need volunteers to support us with walking the children down. We will be leaving at 9am and returning about 11:30am. If you would like to volunteer then please speak to **Miss D'Souza.**

Donations

With half term approaching please can I ask for some junk modelling donations. These can be small cardboard boxes, toilet / kitchen roll tubes, small plastic containers and anything else crafty you don't need anymore. Thank you!

Reminders:

- Please label all clothing (including shoes, wellies, water bottles, coat and spare clothes)
- Spare clothes to be in a drawstring bag or plastic carrier bag (not a rucksack)
- Bookbag to be brought to school every day.
- Coat to be brought to school every day.

YEAR ONE

It has been another busy and exciting week in Year 1!

English

We have been using the book It's Not a Stick to inspire our writing. The children have been practising writing simple sentences, remembering to use capital letters at the beginning of their sentences and full stops at the end. We have been encouraging the children to share their imaginative ideas and turn them into clear, meaningful sentences.

Maths

In maths, we have begun exploring regrouping and how numbers can be made in different ways. The children have been using a range of practical manipulatives to explore number combinations and understand how amounts can be grouped and rearranged. We have also been practising representing our learning using part-whole models and recording addition equations to show how numbers combine to make a whole.

Phonics

This week, we have been assessing the children's phonics knowledge to help us identify their strengths and any areas where they may need further practice. We have included the assessment information in the children's home learning phonics packs. Please take a look and practise any gaps identified to help reinforce their learning and build confidence with their phonics at home. Thank you for your continued support!

Forest School

Our Forest School learning has focused on exploring seasonal changes. The children have been collecting leaves, investigating their different colours and discussing why leaves change colour as autumn progresses. They have also noticed that the evenings are getting darker earlier, helping them to recognise the changes happening in the natural world around them.

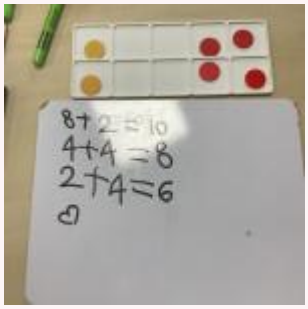
This week, we got creative by making leaf prints on fabric! Using hammers carefully to transfer the natural colours and patterns of the leaves, the children explored a new way of capturing the beauty of autumn. They showed great care and concentration when using the tools, followed safety guidance and thoroughly enjoyed this hands-on activity.

Through our learning this week, the children have continued to develop their curiosity, creativity and independence while building their skills across the curriculum.

Discovery Time

We have spent time this week in discovery time practising lots of the key stills we have learnt this term. We have also enjoyed starting to pre-teach some joins as part of our DT learning to create pumpkins as well as looking at the artist Yayoi Kusama and how she uses repeating dots in her artwork. We have had a go at creating our own versions.

Well done, Year 1, for another fantastic week of learning!













squirrelclass@icknieldinfants.herts.sch.uk

foxclass@icknieldinfants.herts.sch.uk

📚 Reminders

PE days:

- 🦊 **Fox Class:** Monday
- 🐿️ **Squirrel Class:** Tuesday

Please ensure **PE kits are kept on your child's peg in school**.

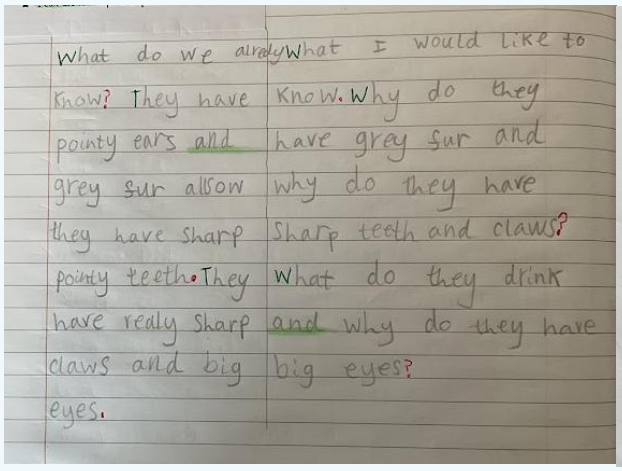
Please also bring in a **named pair of wellies** for your child to leave in school. These will be useful for outdoor learning and play.

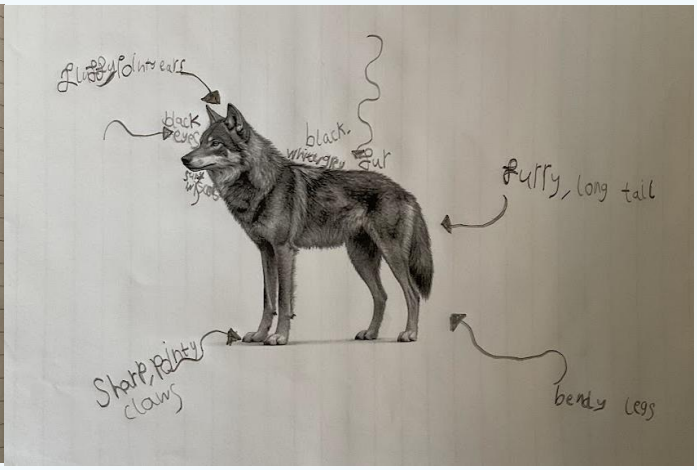
YEAR TWO

What an excellent week we have had in Year 2 to end the first half of Autumn term! In English, we have started our new book this week– Wolves by Emily Gravett. In our first lesson, we enjoyed sharing facts that we already knew about wolves and thought of questions about wolves that we would like to find out. We have also written letters to share facts about wolves and labelled a wolf using adjectives!

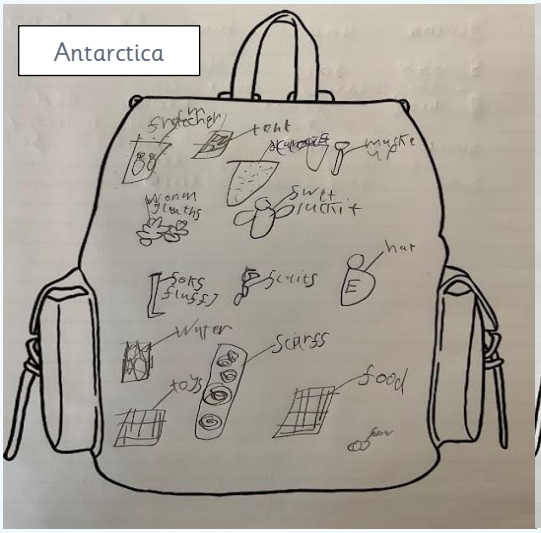
In our Research area, we have been taking part in researching more information on wolves to help us with our English writing!

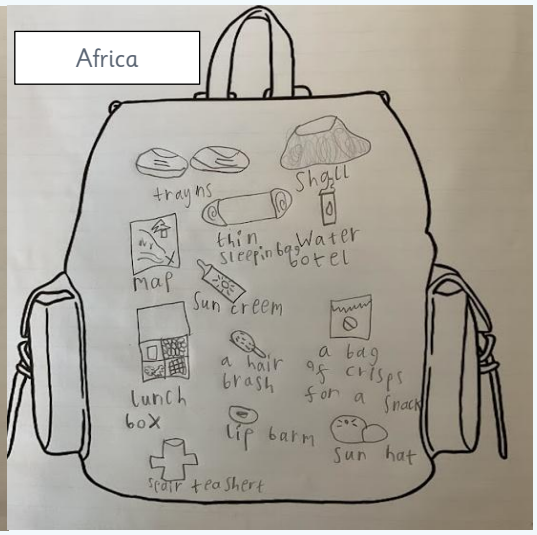






In Geography, we have been learning about continents. We compared North and South America and then we became Explorers! We chose a continent we would like to explore and filled a backpack full of everything we would need. We then thought about what we might find when we get there and what the climate might be like.





In our innovation areas this week, we have been building landmarks using the knowledge we have learnt from our Geography lessons!


The Great Wall of China


The Eiffel Tower

This week we have been making our own Autumn Wreaths. We had to think about what colour leaves we find in autumn to create our wreaths, as well as using our cutting skills to make a hole in a paper plate.



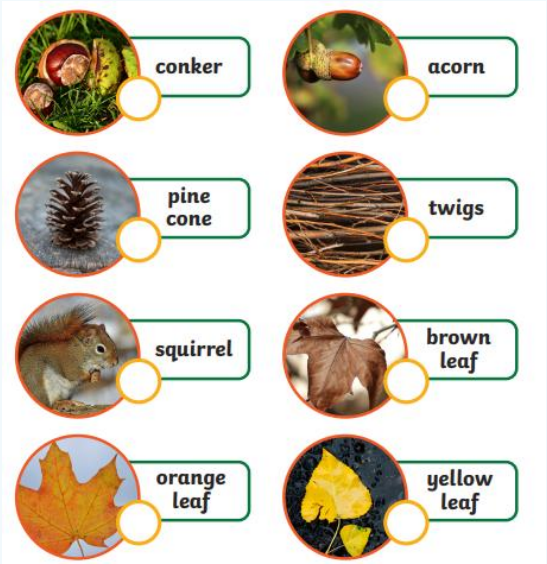
Year 2 put on a wonderful performance for Year 1 and Ladybird Class on Thursday. We performed the song we had learnt in music "Hands, Feet, Heart" fantastically! Well done Year 2 and thank you to Year 1 and Ladybird Class for being a great audience.



We hope you all have a restful half term and we look forward to seeing you all in November!

Year 2 Challenge

Over the half term, see if you can find any signs of Autumn. Below you will find some ideas of things you may be able to find or you can think of some yourself! Send your teacher pictures of what you find using the class emails or bring in a collage/collection to show when we are back after half term.



Reminders:

- Please ensure your child has a labelled pair of welly boots – we have two labelled racks outside the classrooms to place welly boots on. As the weather is changing, welly boots will come in very handy if your child would like to use the mud kitchen and when it rains! We do have spare welly boots that will be available on the first week back if you would like to name a pair for your child to use at school. **Please check in with the class teacher before naming them.**
- We will be outside in all weather, so it may be useful to have a spare pair of socks/tights and items of clothing in a named bag for your children to change into if necessary.
- Reading books to be in **every Wednesday** ready to change and reading records to be in school **every day.**
- Purple Mash and Numbots logins: these can be found on the first page of your child's reading record. Numbots will be used more frequently next half term, so please do have a practice at home!

CLASSROOM CORNER

WHAT TO TALK ABOUT WITH YOUR CHILD THIS WEEK

October is **Black History Month**. This week, why not spend a few minutes talking together about how we treat others and celebrate what makes people unique?

❤️‍🔥 What makes you special and unique?

🌎 How are you the same as other people? How are you different?

🤝 What does it mean to be fair?

😊 How can you help someone feel included if they are new or feeling left out?

📚 Can you think of someone who has inspired others by being brave or standing up for what is right?

🎨 What is something you can learn from someone whose experiences are different from yours?

⭐ Why is it a good thing that people are not all the same?

💬 What is one kind thing you could do for someone else this week?

TRY THIS AT HOME

Shape Hunt! 🔺⭕🟦

Turn a walk, a car journey or even a trip around the house into a shape-spotting challenge! Can your child find:

🔺 A triangle

🟦 A square

⭕ A circle

▭ A rectangle

Before they find each shape, ask: 🤔 Where do you think we might see one?

As you spot shapes:

☑ Count how many of each you find.

☑ Compare which shape is the most common.

☑ Talk about what makes each shape special.

🎯 **Extra challenge:** Can your child find a shape that isn't on the list, such as a hexagon or octagon?

💬 **Talk about it:** Why do you think certain shapes are used for different objects? Why are wheels circles? Why are doors usually rectangles?

The best learning often happens when children start noticing the maths that is all around them!

STAR CELEBRATIONS ★ ☆ ☆⋆

STARS OF THE WEEK

Very well done to our stars of the week! These children will enjoy a tea party (squash and biscuits) with Mrs Squires at some point next week. They will also choose a story sack to enjoy at home next weekend (to be returned by Wednesday please).

Caterpillar: Leo

Ladybird: Liam

Butterfly: Isla O-B

Squirrel: Simrat

Fox: Celine

Dolphin: Tommy

Penguin: Mathilda R-G