



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Forgiveness

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

19th March 2021

Diary Dates

22nd March: Reward Day

26th March: Easter Breakfast

Egg decoration and rolling competitions

School finishes at 1pm for Easter break

13th April: Children return to school

16th April: Allocations Day for Primary and Middle schools

27th April: Reception class screening

24th – 28th May: Danes Residential trip to PGL (if restrictions allow)

31st May – 4th June: Half Term Week

8th July: Change over day – children visit new classes

16th July: Reward day

20th July: School finishes at 1pm for summer break

We were delighted to welcome the children back into school at the beginning of last week – it is just wonderful to hear their happy chatter and laughter and see their smiling faces once again. We have been so impressed by how quickly everyone has settled back into their classes and been able to pick up straight away on their learning. All the efforts that children, parents and teachers alike put into the remote learning has most certainly paid off. Thank you for your dedication and support with this; we know it was tough but, without a doubt, it was worth the effort!

It has been wonderful to see the range of fantastic learning that the children have enjoyed already since their return to school, many of the highlights are shared in the class pages. There really has been a 'buzz' of learning going on around the building since the very first day back.

Next week is the final week of the Spring term so, on Monday, the children will have their reward day. There will be lots of fun activities for them to enjoy in recognition of their hard work and good behaviour. On Friday, we are delighted to see the return of the annual Aston St. Mary's egg decorating and egg rolling competitions (see below).

As this is our final newsletter of the term, we hope that you all enjoy a well-earned rest over the Easter holidays. Hopefully, we will enjoy some sunny spring days and can look forward to a brighter year ahead as restrictions are eased and we can begin to get our lives back to normal.

Thank you for your continued support.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 5th January 2021 to Friday 26th March 2021

HALF TERM Break - Monday 15th February 2021 to 19th February 2021

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 13th April 2021 to Tuesday 20th July 2021

HALF TERM Break - Monday 31st May 2021 to Friday 4th June 2021

Bank Holiday (School Closed) - Monday 3rd May 2021

School Meals

To order school meals, please log onto your School Gateway account via the website or the app.

DINNER MONEY FEES £2.70 per meal



Merits were awarded to:

Kacie, Ella, Poppy C, Poppy F,
Tallulah, Astrid, Summer, Finlay,
Jake, Nathan, Reggie, Hanna,
Isabelle, Jess, Albert, Charlie, Mia,
Aidan, Connor, Ethan R, Gabriella,
Primrose, Daniel, Azariah, Ava,
Amelie, Orlagh, Teddy, Betsy,
Jessica J, Tate, Muctarr, Alfie, and LJ



Shining Stars were awarded to:

Ademidun and
Phoebie

Water Bottles



Please make sure that your child brings their water bottle to school containing fresh water each day. Please note, these should contain **water only** as it hydrates without providing extra calories or risking harm to teeth.

A Thought from Reverend Jenny

As we continue to live with Covid restrictions and fears:

*'Let us remember that pain is a sign that we are alive,
problems are a sign that we are strong
and prayer is a sign that we are not alone.
If we can acknowledge these truths
and condition our hearts and minds,
our lives will be more meaningful,
different and worthwhile.'* (Pope Francis)

*'Having faith does not mean having no difficulties,
but having the strength to face them,
knowing we are not alone'.
(Pope Francis)*

Notices



Music Lessons



Mrs Crowley and Lara Minnis are thrilled to be back in school teaching piano, saxophone and clarinet. We now have three clarinet players in school as well as a saxophonist. The children have worked so hard in their online lessons we are so proud of their progress! We have so many talented musicians in school. Mrs Crowley can't wait to be able to start up orchestra club again!



Litter Picking Champions!



We are very proud of Mia (Orchard class) and Ollie (Shackadell class) as they decided they wanted to help the environment. They went for a long walk around Aston picking up litter and filled three bags full of rubbish. Well done Mia and Ollie – it is wonderful to hear of you doing such a brilliant job to improve the local environment.

Supporting your child with writing



We were delighted that so many parents were able to attend our remote workshop with our Herts for Learning English adviser Martin Galway. We hope that you agree that it was a very informative and useful session.

We would be very grateful for any feedback you may have – please email Mrs Branagan:

mrsbranagan@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

Notices

Goodbye Mrs Lyme

Next Wednesday, we will be saying goodbye to Mrs Lyme; as the longest serving member of our staff team, it really is hard to imagine the school without her! Having worked at the school for over 26 years, Mrs Lyme really does deserve the time to now focus on herself and we wish her all the best for a long and happy retirement. So many children, and indeed adults, will have fond memories of the care and support given to them by Mrs Lyme over the years.

Mrs Lyme – we will miss you and would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication over so many years.



Friday 26th March 2021 Egg Rolling and Egg Decorating Competitions

During the morning of Friday 26th March, the children will have a fun time with all the classes having an egg decorating competition and egg rolling competition. This has been a long-standing fun tradition at Aston St Mary's School that we sadly missed last year so we are really looking forward to taking part next Friday.

The children need to decorate **one** HARD BOILED EGG at home and bring it into school with them on Friday morning and these will be judged in their classes.

This is then followed by the egg rolling competition where the children roll their decorated eggs down a slope in the playground to see whose egg goes the furthest.

(Top Tip: try not to stick too much on the eggs when decorating them as they don't roll very well!)

Prizes are given to the most interestingly decorated egg as well as the egg that goes the furthest.

There are not many eggs that survive the egg rolling competition, so they are disposed of at school.

Class News

Shackadell Class

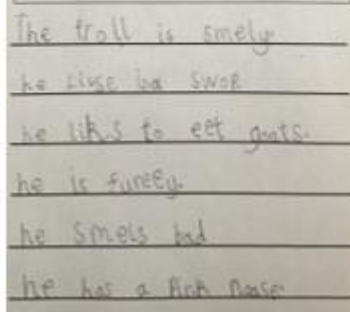
Shackadell, it has been an absolute pleasure to have you back these last two weeks. It's so lovely to have a classroom full of noise, laughter and learning again.

We have had plenty of child-initiated learning but have also been really busy in our adult led learning too. In phonics, we have been recapping all of the phase 3 sounds, which the children are becoming very confident with- super job everyone!

In maths, we have been revisiting all the different concepts we covered during our remote learning including subitizing, one more and less and identifying how many parts can make a whole.

In topic, we have been continuing with our fairy tale topic which the children have loved! Last week, we made and described our own trolls out of clay and this week we are looking at all the different elements and themes of fairy tales, muddling them up to make new, and sometimes rather funny, stories.

The children have settled in so well into school life and we are so proud of them all. Sadly, we have had to say goodbye this week to Charlie who is moving to Cornwall. We will all really miss him but know that Charlie will have the most wonderful time at his new school which is right by the beach!



Class News

Peartree Class

Hi Peartree,

What a fantastic two weeks we have had with everyone back in class. The children are so enthusiastic and are enjoying being back with their friends. We are so very proud of them all.

We have had so much fun in Peartree Class. Last week, in English we completed our unit on instructions where the children had planned, written and then followed their instructions on how to make a sandwich. They thoroughly enjoyed this especially when they got to eat them.



In Topic this half term, we have been learning about The United Kingdom and we went on a 'Picnic Around the United Kingdom'. We looked at some of the foods that come from all over the UK.

We tried lots of different foods such as cheddar cheese, Yorkshire pudding, Welsh rarebit, Irish soda bread and Irish butter and Scottish shortbread to name a few.

The children all were very brave to try foods some of them had not had before.



Class News

Orchard Class

Wow, what a brilliant first two weeks it has been with all of the children back in school. It has been wonderful to see the children every day, there have been lots of smiling faces and they are happy to see each other again. They have settled back into school life so well and have really been enjoying their learning!

In English, we have started a new story called 'This Rabbit Belongs to Emily Brown'. We have explored the story through role play and created our own story maps. This week, we have also been planning and writing our own versions of the story, and we have been so impressed with the excellent writing!



Year Two enjoyed a scavenger hunt in maths last week, they had lots of clues to find the answers to different things they had been learning about.



This week we have been looking at multiplication and finding multiples of a number. Year Three have been deepening their knowledge about fractions in their maths lessons.

Both years Two and Three have been learning all about plants in Science this half term. We have been experimenting which conditions are best for growing plants; we have even hidden some in the cupboard to see if they can grow without light. We are excited to find out the results soon!

On Monday afternoons, we have been having some fantastic forest school sessions with Mrs Skull. It has been great fun getting outdoors. We have been spotting lots of signs of Spring as well as exploring the school grounds and forest school area for different aspects of nature. We enjoyed our game called 'Go find it!' where we had to search for things that were rough, small, huge, spiky, made us say WOW as well as many other things!



We are looking forward to another week of learning next week!

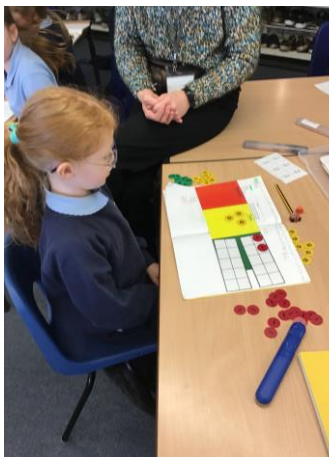
Mrs Merry, Miss Branagan and Mrs Davies

Class News

Haffydown Class

It has been so wonderful to have our whole class back together these past two weeks. Lots of fun, laughter and learning has already taken place and I am so proud of the way the children have settled back into school and their routine.

In our English lessons, we have been exploring the Ancient Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. To help us to engage with the story, we took part in several different drama activities. We role played conversations between different characters, commented a fight scene, consider feelings by making conscience alley, spoke monologues and orally retold the story using our masks. Over this week and next, we will be using the story to explore different aspects of grammar as well as how the author builds suspense. From our photos, can you guess our emotions?



During our maths learning, we have been mastering the regrouping method for column addition. We have used place value counters to help us to understand how to regroup ones for tens, tens for hundreds and hundreds for thousands. We have played lots of maths games to help us secure this concept. A firm favourite is "regroupy" which you can play at home:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69vK5oqnGQM>

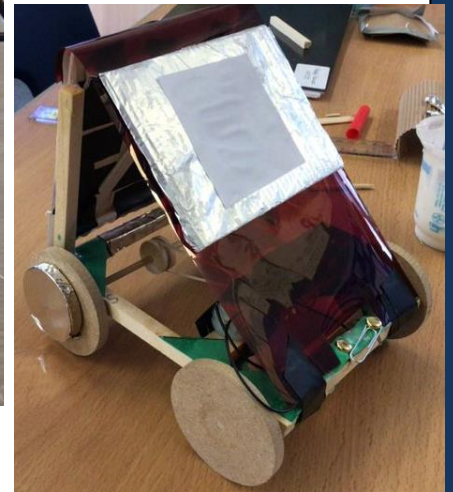
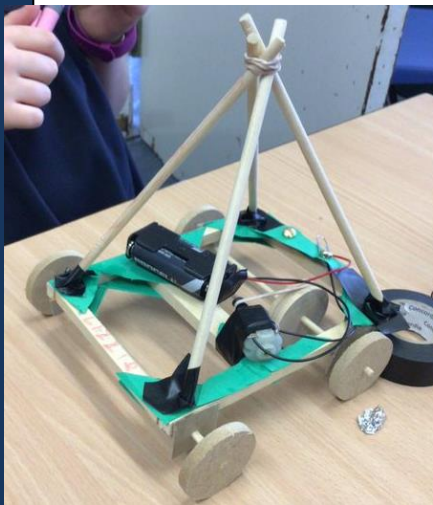
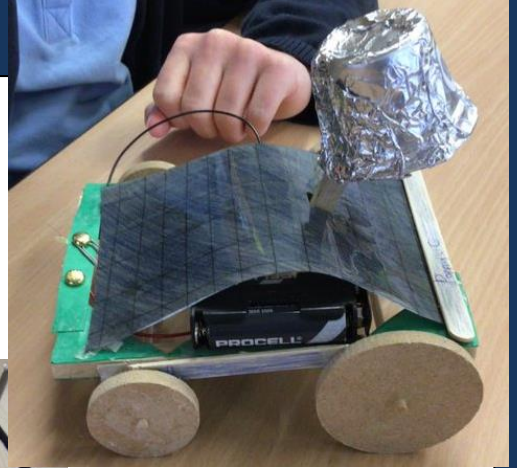
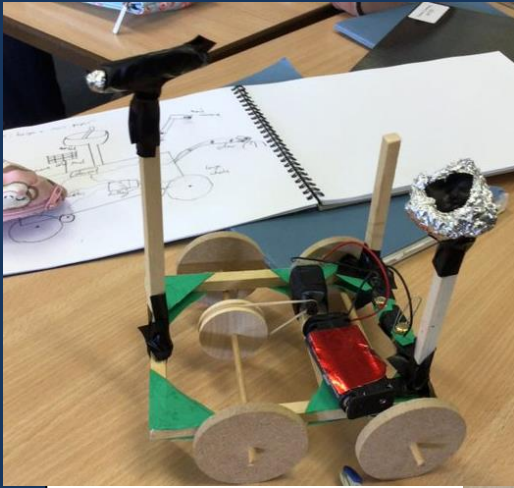


In science, we have been sorting and classifying animals. We discovered many weird and wonderful invertebrates and how their characteristics differ.



Class News

Danes Class Design and Technology – Mars Rovers



It is absolutely wonderful to have Danes class back at school; all their hard work and engagement whilst learning from home has clearly paid off as they have been able to settle quickly back into learning at school and are impressing us every single day with their learning across the curriculum. It is also wonderful to see them being able to enjoy time with their friends once again.

On return to school, the children enjoyed a two-day Design and Technology project. We began by finding out about 'Perseverance' – NASA's Mars Rover. This linked with our learning about Earth and space in science last half term. The children then designed and made their own Mars Rovers which were powered by electric motors. This enabled them to apply previous scientific learning about electrical circuits and forces. A pulley was used to turn the axle and it was important to ensure friction was reduced between the chassis and the wheels. Lots of fun was had testing the rovers on different surfaces – they worked brilliantly!

In English, our work has been based on an extract taken from 'The First Men in the Moon' by H.G. Wells. The children have produced some amazing science-fiction writing inspired by the text in which they have portrayed the sense of wonder at being the first to discover life on the moon. We were so very impressed by the range of narrative techniques and new vocabulary that they included so naturally within their writing.

Our learning in Maths, has focused upon fractions and in particular multiplication of fractions and mixed numbers. This can be a tricky area of learning but, by using multiple representations, the children have made rapid progress and developed both fluency and understanding. As one child commented '*I thought I knew what to do but now I really do understand*'.

Keep up the hard work Danes – you are all amazing!