

Dear Families,

We talked about and practised our poppy poem for the VE Day celebrations last Thursday, It was lovely that so many of you could come and celebrate with us. I think you will agree that the children did brilliantly, remembering their lines, performing and keeping their poppies on their fingers for the whole of the proceeding performances by the older children.

PSHE fitted nicely with VE Day last week, when we were thinking about what it feels like to miss someone or something. Mrs William's shared the story 'Dogger' by Shirley Hughes a very old but brilliant story about a little boy who loses his cuddly toy and, with the kindness of his sister gets him back again. This week we talked about how we can be proud of other people and how celebrating their success can also make us feel good. Lots of the children thought of times when they have felt happy for someone else. We also shared stories to help the children understand about being a responsible citizen. This fitted in nicely with the learning we are doing about taking care of our environment.

In RE this week we discussed how to look after our world and the animals in it. We also shared the story 'Belonging' by Jeanie Baker, which is a follow up picture book to 'Window' which we looked at earlier in the year. This book follows the life of Tracy, who marries Sam, the boy who featured in 'Window'. The children really showed their observation skills as we looked at the world through Tracy's window in her house and, in contrast to Sam's home, Tracy's home is in a run down and dirty city at the beginning of the story. As the story unfolds, we see how the people in her community transform their urban environment by introducing nature in the form of trees and plants.

In maths we have continued working up to 20 and also manipulating shapes by matching them into spaces to make pictures, sometimes having to rotate them. The word 'rotate' was new to many of the children so please practise it at home too. The number work we have been doing helped the children tell mathematical stories using 'first', 'then' and 'now'. For example, "first Bob had three strawberries and then he ate one so now there are..."

In PE over the past few weeks we have been preparing for sports day, the date of which has now been confirmed by Mrs Ratcliffe in his newsletter last week. This week we used the hurdles, beanbags and sideways jumping block. The children enjoyed practising all these skills but particularly trying to balance the egg on the spoon for the egg and spoon race.

We have continued with Phase Four in phonics and have been learning about adjacent consonants at the beginning, middle and end of words. Well done to everyone who did super writing in the mini writing books. Please remember, it's not about spelling the words correctly if they're not phonetic. Let the children have a go and use the phonics they know. We have also had lots of phonics classroom challenges, which some of the children have really enjoyed doing. These classroom challenges will sometimes be phonics or maths related and can also be any other area of the curriculum. The challenges will be in addition to the usual classwork and the children can 'choose' to do them in return for a stamp on the challenge chart. When they have completed five challenges they get to choose a certificate to take home. [Congratulations](#) to Simi, Axton, Zachary and Skye for being the first children to earn their first certificate this week.

Mrs Jarvis' has given me the following information about her music lessons over the last two weeks: *We have been continuing to learn about the orchestra and we have been looking at the string family. We investigated why we thought they belonged to the same family and what characteristics they had in common but also what made them different from each other. We explored the idea of 'pitch' and put the string instruments in order from highest sound to lowest sound by listening to*

some different pieces of music. We finished off by making our own 'pitch tree' with all the instruments. We watched the string instruments in action in 'The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra' and had a go at pretending to play them.

This week, we have been looking at the brass family. We investigated why we thought they belonged to the same family and again, what characteristics they had in common but also what made them different from each other. We had a look at a real life trumpet and trombone and investigated how we thought they might make a sound. We watched some different orchestral clips with the different brass instruments taking centre stage and talked about how the music they play is different – such as high and fast music for the trumpet and low and often slower music for the tuba. We watched the brass instruments in action within the orchestra using our composition 'A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra'. We still haven't found Tormod the troll's music to guide him home, maybe next week?!

We had a brilliant end to this week when we were invited to watch a performance of 'The Wizard of Oz' in the hall. The actors came into school this morning and did an amazing job. The children were a brilliant audience and absolutely captivated throughout.

The children have been their usual imaginative selves with some great acting of their own when they chose to make a pizza restaurant in the classroom last week. This has continued through this week and they want to keep it a little longer still. They did a great job playing the different roles of chef, waiter and customer.

Next week is the last week of the half-term and we will be having a little adventure into Castle Wood on the estate on Thursday morning. I emailed a letter out on Thursday this week with more details and thank you to the people who have already responded. I usually do a treasure hunt and pirate adventure near the castle, in the woods, but this year it will be extra special because we have been given permission to actually go inside the castle for part of our adventure. **As I said in my email and letter, please don't tell the children about this, as it will be set up as a spontaneous reaction to the delivery of a mysterious treasure box and pirate hat on Wednesday.** I wanted to let you know early so you can arrange to come with us if you wish and are able to. We will be leaving school at about 9.30 and should be back for 11ish.

Finally, can I just ask people not to make marks with pen or pencil in the reading scheme books please. I know it's tempting to underline the digraphs and trigraphs to help the children spot them, but even the pencil makes have made a bit of a mess in the books when I try to rub them out. Thank you!

Have a lovely weekend. Kind regards from Mrs Watts.