



Bloxham CE Primary School

October 2024 Newsletter

Dear Families

And so, we have reached the end of the first term and what a busy one it has been.

We have welcomed families to Meet the Teacher, Open Classrooms and classrooms have burst at the seams for our first four class assemblies. The majority of families have also now had the opportunity to meet with class teachers to share the progress their child is making in school.

The children have celebrated Harvest, Black History Month and World Mental Health Day and had the opportunity to take part in a host of clubs from art and drama, to Pokemon and Uno.



On the sporting front the children have embraced Corefulness, we are already seeing improvements in their coordination within these sessions and are looking forward to seeing the impact upon the wider curriculum. Sports events this term have included cross country, a level one Swimming Gala, a Touch Rugby Festival and a Netball Festival at the Warriner. The children also have the opportunity to enjoy regular lunchtime sport with Mr Sorrell and after school rugby (Y5/6), football (Y1/2) and Tennis (Y3/4).

On the musical front, our Monday afternoons are filled with the sound of band practice courtesy of iRock, followed by choir and peripatetic guitar. We have also been able to reintroduce whole class instrumental sessions in Year 4, who are studying brass.

Returning from half term, we look forward to being able to utilise our temporary hall space and to hopefully return to a playground with less Heras fencing. We have also been assured by OCC that the gas cannisters, necessary for our temporary kitchen will finally have been moved to an improved position. You will already have seen the temporary fix to the fire-track pathway, again we await OCC for a more permanent fix and hope to have more answers after meetings taking place in half term.

Events planned for T2 include portrait workshops funded by Kingham Lodge and an in-school poppy project to commemorate Remembrance (details below) Year 5 and 6 will be at St Mary's for Remembrance on 11th November at 11.00am as well as the House Captains

representing the school at the War Memorial on Sunday 10th November. Finally, preparations for our Christmas festivities won't be far off with very exciting events planned for December 13th!

The children (and staff) have worked incredibly hard this T1 and we wish all our families a restful half term.

Sarah Marshall

Half Term Projects

Remembrance Poppy Art

As part of our work commemorating Remembrance, we are hoping to create an art project to be displayed outside the school. Each child will create plastic bottle poppies which will then be used to fill lettering forming the name 'Bloxham'. **To enable us to achieve this, over half term, the children will each need to collect, at least one disposable "one-use" plastic water bottle, the thinner and more flexible/squashable the plastic, the better, as this will enable it to be cut more easily.** Please bring water bottles to school immediately after half term.

Pumpkin Carving Stencil Competition

Pupils have been provided with an entry form to design a pumpkin carving stencil over the half term. Whilst pupils are welcome to go the extra mile to also carve a pumpkin using their design, this is not required. Designs will be judged against *relevance to our autumnal theme* and *likely manageability for successful carving*. There will be a small prize for each of the winners – one for Upper School and one for Lower School. Entries to be returned to class teachers **Monday 4 November**.

Design Your Own Postcard

We are excited to announce a "Design Your Own Postcard" competition! We want you to get creative and design a postcard (one design for Foundation/ KS1 and one for KS2) that teachers can send home to acknowledge a great piece of work or positive affirmation for your child. We want the design to show off our school values: Inclusive, Caring, Ambitious, Trustworthy, Creative and Honest. Think about how you can use these values in your design. Maybe, you could draw pictures that show Caring for someone or being Ambitious or use colours and shapes that represent Honesty and Trustworthiness. The best designs will be turned into real postcards! Everyone can enter, so get your pencils, pens, and imagination ready! Please put your designs onto A4 paper in landscape orientation and send to your class teacher or Mrs Kidman by **18th November 2024**.

Thank you! Mrs Kidman

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Attendance

Overall attendance across the whole school during October was 96.33 %. A massive well done to class 3W for achieving the highest attendance for a class in October at 99.14%. Congratulations to Year 3 for the highest attendance for a year group at 97.93 %

Our October Super-Here0s are: Foundation/Keys Stage1: Jamie, Bailey and Eva

Key stage 2: Isobel, Spencer and Gracie

Why Online Consultations?

After last week's successful consultation evenings, it might seem a bit bizarre to now explain why the school adopts this format rather than the historically traditional face to face format, which some may feel preferable.

At Bloxham we feel that the advantages of online parents' evenings outweigh the disadvantages.

Online parents' evenings offer convenience. As parents/carers, you can join from anywhere on mobile phones, eliminating barriers like travel time, parking and after school activities, which in our busy modern world is especially beneficial. The opportunity to join from the comfort of home can also help reduce anxiety, fostering more open communication.

Moving to an online system has ensured better time management with meetings which both start on time and stay on track, leading to more focused conversations and respect for everyone's time. There can surely be very few people who enjoy waiting for an appointment which should have happened 30 minutes ago but hasn't, because previous appointments over ran. At best such a situation is irritating and at worst its highly stressful, causing subsequent difficulties.

The system comes into its own where families are separated or where one parent works away. This inclusivity ensures that both parents can be involved in their child's education, fostering better communication and support. Involving both parents in online parents' evenings can positively impact children by demonstrating a united support system, which can enhance their emotional well-being. When children see their parents engaged in their education, it can boost their motivation and academic performance. Furthermore, consistent communication between parents and teachers fosters a collaborative environment. Questions can be logged in advance reducing the risk of forgetting on the day, whilst the chat feature provides a further route to raise a question during the meeting itself.

Importantly online parents' evenings also help to protect staff by creating a more controlled environment, reducing the potential for confrontations or difficult interactions that can sometimes occur face-to-face.

As with any system a counter argument can always be found. Technology can fail and some families may feel that meeting a teacher over a screen is less attractive than meeting

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face to face. At Bloxham, we have proactively mitigated against the latter of these by ensuring we preface each of our online sessions with a face-to-face Open Classroom event enabling positive relationships to be formed with parents and for which pupils are also able to participate.

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

We will be selling various items to raise funds for the RBL from Monday 4th November for the week. Items will range in price from 50p - £1. Please note that we are unable to provide change, so please can your child bring the correct money into school.

Individual and Sibling School Photographs

Photographs will be taken in school on the 7th November. This will be for children and siblings who currently attend Bloxham Primary School.

Office Hours and equipment brought in late

Our school office is open each day 8:30 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 4:00. Outside of these times, messages should either be emailed or left as a voicemail. If your child leaves equipment at home which is required for the day, we will no longer call home as standard. If you become aware that an item is at home and are able to drop it at school, please ensure it is clearly marked with your child's name and class and leave it in the box in our foyer. Monitors will aim to check and deliver items at 10:30 and 12:30, however we are unable to guarantee this.

Uniform

A reminder that pupils are expected to wear our school uniform at all times. As we move into the colder weather, please do feel able however to provide your child(ren) with additional base layers if they feel the cold. Please ensure that all clothing is labelled with your child's full name to ease return in the event that it becomes separated from your child. We have a new lost property box in the quad area, at the bottom of the Year 2 ramp. Please check there if your child has lost an item of clothing or other property.

School Website

Please do regularly checkout our school website, particularly the calendar for important dates throughout the school year ([School calendar](#)) class and curriculum pages.

We have also added a new Community News section to the website so please check for any events happening within the local area.

Safeguarding

During the half term break, we are aware that some children might take part in Halloween activities. The following link shares some top tips for ensuring this is as safe as possible for children, including advice about flammable costumes, candle safety, visibility in the dark, carving pumpkins safely, road safety and risks of button batteries.

<https://capt.org.uk/halloween/>

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Foundation Stage

We've had a wonderful time in Foundation since our last newsletter, filled with excitement, exploration, and new learning! Here are some of the highlights:

In Maths, the children have been busy comparing numbers and groups of objects and have explored both 2D and 3D shapes. We have also begun our Mastering Number journey — a fun, foundational program for building early number skills (think of it like Phonics but for Maths). The children are growing in confidence, and we can't wait to see where this learning adventure will take them. Speaking of Phonics, the children have been working so hard! We are learning a new sound every day, and the children are now starting to read and use digraphs. It's amazing to see their progress as they begin to blend sounds and read simple words. We also took an exciting virtual tour of Bloxham and the surrounding areas! The children loved finding their homes on Google Earth, and it was a joy to hear them share stories and photos of places they've explored with their families. This inspired a wonderful classroom project where we created our very own junk modelling village, "Foundation Street." The creativity and teamwork that went into building the village was fantastic! Our story time has been full of adventures too. We've read the story of The Little Red Hen, and after hearing about her baking efforts, we tried making our own delicious bread! The children used their Phonics knowledge to help write a recipe, and the results were both impressive and tasty. As autumn arrives, we've taken full advantage of the season's natural beauty. The children have crafted wreaths, made our very own "Leaf Man," and even created a giant hedgehog using the vibrant autumn leaves. Their creativity and enthusiasm have really shone through in these activities. We've also continued our journey in Drawing Club, where the children have shown brilliant imagination by coming up with their own versions of The Three Little Pigs. Their storytelling and illustrations have been such fun to witness!

We are so proud of all the hard work and joy the children have put into their learning. Thank you for your continued support at home — it truly makes a difference. We look forward to seeing where our next adventures will take us!

Year 1

This term, Year 1 have made fantastic progress in their learning. In maths, the children have been exploring addition, working with number bonds to 10, and practicing finding the missing number in number sentences. For English, we linked our learning to Black History Month by writing biographies about Lonnie Johnson, the brilliant inventor of the Super Soaker. In history, the children delved into a key moment of British history by watching the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Our science lessons focused on the human body, where the children explored body parts and learned how the five senses help to keep us safe. To celebrate Harvest, the children created their own colourful hats and performed a lively poem about growing fruits and vegetables. It has been a busy and exciting term of learning!

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Year 2

Year 2 have worked incredibly hard this term on their history learning and it was lovely for the children to be able to share this with parents during the class assemblies. We are also incredibly proud of the year group for their resilience during the cross country. We have produced some wonderful artwork in the style of the artist Alma Thomas, this links in with Black History month. We also learnt interesting facts about the activist; Rosa Parks and made persuasive posters.

We enjoyed walking to church for our Harvest celebration. During the celebration Year 2 talked about the story of the feeding of the 5000. This was a miracle. We talked about how you can't make bread unless you have all the ingredients. We linked this to having the right ingredients for a good community, we chose – trust, respect, honesty, fun, kindness, loyalty, smiles, helpfulness, patience and love.

Year 3

We have fully immersed ourselves into everything Stoneage and we had the privilege of having a forest school session run by Beth's Mum, Hanna, where we learnt the basics of lighting a fire as a Stoneage man using a bow drill. We concluded it was very hard for modern day man to do this (Hanna had spent 4 hours trying to light a fire with one!) Mind you, for a Stoneage man it would have been a common occurrence. We also had a tool making session and archaeological dig. They have all been amazing and we are so proud of their mature attitude and behaviour.



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Well done to 3W for embracing our swimming sessions. They are disappointed that they have now finished! Thank you to the two parents who have helped with the walking every week. It is very much appreciated! After half term, 3K will be swimming. If there are any parent volunteers who are willing to help walk us there and back, please let the office know.

Year 4

During our class study of the local dig at Calthorpe Gardens, which uncovered Anglo-Saxon remains, we explored the rich history of our area. We learned about archaeological techniques and the significance of discovering artifacts to better understand past communities. We examined items found at the site, discussing their importance and what they reveal about daily life during the Anglo-Saxon period.

We embarked on an exciting weaving project that brought our creativity to life. Each student selected vibrant colours of yarn for the warp and weft, creating unique patterns on their looms. We learned techniques like over-under weaving and colour blending, while discussing the cultural significance of textiles in various societies.

Year 5

In Year 5, during Term 1, the children have engaged in a variety of exciting learning activities. They have completed two narrative writing pieces inspired by *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes and *Journey* by Aaron Becker, enhancing their creative writing skills. Additionally, they wrote a biography of Floella Benjamin, connecting their learning to Black History Month and developing their nonfiction writing.

In Maths, the focus has been on place value and the operations of addition and subtraction, building a solid foundation in number fluency.

In other areas of learning, the children have been fascinated by the Shang Dynasty, learning about its history and culture. Science lessons have been hands-on, with the children exploring forces and mechanisms through practical activities, making learning both interactive and fun.



Year 6

Year 6 had a wonderful, educational day at Holdenby House. The children were taught a variety of skills that would help them if they were alive during the war. They enjoyed:

- learning about the weekly rations and helping Mrs North in the kitchen preparing seasonal wartime food.
- Helping Mrs Fort with her Make-Do-and-Mend project.
- Learning about Air Raid Shelters and Gas Masks with 'The Major'.

The children were all engaged and asked thoughtful questions. Well Done Year 6!

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Year 6 are also travelling virtually with David Attenborough to Antarctica! The children are very excited because our school name is in a time capsule which is being buried in Antarctica. The crew set sail on Sunday 13th October and we'll be receiving regular updates from them which we'll share in class. This links perfectly to our Geography topic of Frozen Kingdoms which we'll embark on in Term 3.



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Collective Worship and Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service

Collective Worship was an outside occasion for the first two weeks of term but then the weather defeated us! Since then, we have all joined a 'Teams' call from classrooms to listen to stories from the Old Testament and to share in our individual and whole class achievements. Well Done everyone!

On Tuesday, as staff and children we filled St Mary's church and raised the roof! Sarah and Dale welcomed us all. Foundation launched the occasion with confident performances and strong singing and the bar was set! Each class shared fascinating information about their theme interspersed with delightful Harvest related songs and our signature song; My Lighthouse. As we walked back to school, the sun shone warmly on our faces and we all felt an inner glow. Mr Singleton took countless videos and plans to amalgamate them to share with parents and carers. Some of the children's Artwork is on display in St Mary's. Pop in and see it. Don't forget the sausage sizzle in the church yard on Saturday 26th October at 11.30am - everyone is welcome.



Achievements from Outside of School



Well done to Amber who recently achieved a silver medal and certificate in her gymnastics competition, has completed her gold award and is now working towards trophies!

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High Flyers After School Club

The half term is complete, and what a great time we have had!

Last week, Banbury Fair came to High Flyers with hook a duck, tin-can alley, bowling and chocolate apple making!

This week we have been celebrating with a 'spooky' theme, and the children have been creating some fabulous artwork! We finished the week off with a fantastic party. There were lots of exciting activities and some delicious party food.

High Flyer winners were Ellie and Beatrix, congratulations!

We would like to wish you all a very restful half-term and we look forward to seeing you all in November for more celebrations!

We are also running a very popular Halloween holiday club at Christopher Rawlins Primary School in Adderbury, on Monday 28th of October. There will be lots of fun games and activities for all the children to get involved in. We are sure the children will love it!

You can book through our website, <https://www.highflyers.org.uk> or on our booking platform <https://highflyersoxfordlimited.ipalbookings.com/>

Vouchers - for those working over 16 hours, you can take advantage of the 'Government's Choices Scheme', to save 20% on childcare. Also, when booking through our system you can pay by bank payment, so there is no booking fee.

We also offer 10% off for siblings attending the club!

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