



NOTRE DAME PREP SCHOOL



SPRING HALF TERM 2023

Welcome to our half termly newsletter. It seems but a moment since we began again after Christmas; I remain convinced that clocks run faster inside school gates! It is fitting that I write on the day that we remember Saint Scholastica, the patron saint education and of course the Benedictine sisters. She protects against stormy weather too so I hope she has a watchful eye over the proceedings for cross country this afternoon.

We have been busy as you will see and it is a pleasure to update you on all the wonderful happenings at NDPS. Highlights for me have been our brave cross country runners and yesterday's Dress to Express which was so much fun. Looking ahead, we have so much more to look forward to and I must thank you all again for your ongoing support.

Wishing you a safe and relaxing half term with our children.

- Rob Thornton, Headmaster

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- 20TH FEB- BACK TO SCHOOL
- 27TH FEB- USBORNE BOOK SALE
- PARENTS' EVENINGS
- 2ND MARCH - WORLD BOOK DAY
- 22ND FEB- MASS AT ST JOHN'S - KS2



MINIBEASTS

What an exciting half term the children have had in Minibeasts, participating in lots of fun activities. The main themes covered were, 'Winter' 'Chinese New Year' and a 'French week'.

Both nurseries made penguins, polar bears and winter hats & gloves. The children enjoyed playing in sensory experiences, making the classrooms snowy! We talked about the cold weather, naming the animals that live outside and how they keep warm.

Butterflies Nursery decided to make bird feeders to hang on the trees in the garden.

Both Nurseries had a fantastic time learning about Chinese New Year. We listened to stories, made decorations and wore beautiful costumes. To finish the week the children performed a Dragon dance.

During storytelling week, there was great excitement with firstly a visit from Prep 5 and a visit from mummy's and daddy's. Everybody had a good time during 'Stay & play' joining in with activities connected to the Gruffalo and Goldilocks and the three bears.

The children enjoyed French week, by helping make a café, listening to songs, playing games and learning some French words such as 'Bonjour' & 'Au Revoir'



PRE PREP

Pre Prep began this half term thinking about winter. The children have learnt how to support garden birds during these colder months and enjoyed making simple bird feeders. They have found out about hibernation and why certain animals do this. The children had a super time exploring a range of materials including sticks, leaves and moss to create a suitable bed for a creature to hibernate in.

We have studied the Polar Regions and created a lovely new display for the classroom. The children have also loved winter themed yoga, building igloos using sugar cubes, investigating ice and listening to Vivaldi's winter from The Four Seasons.

National Storytelling Week has been another highlight of this half term. The children have listened to lots of traditional tales and enjoyed taking part in a range of fun activities including baking gingerbread men, building a new house for the three little pigs to live in, acting out scenes from Goldilocks and the Three Bears and decorating 'magic' beans for Jack. Pre Prep also completed some excellent independent writing based around these stories too!

At the end of January, the children enjoyed celebrating Chinese New Year. Lots of fun was had taking part in a 'Chopstick Challenge' and making lucky red envelopes complete with an origami rabbit on the front.

Happy half term everyone!

Miss Grand and Miss Duell



PREP 1

Prep 1 have been busy learning about Winter this half term. We have looked at how animals survive during winter and observed how the world around has altered as the seasons change.

In Science we had lots of fun investigating the best ways to melt ice- and the 'Scientist Goggles' were of course absolutely necessary!

Our Toy topic has been great fun. The children visited The Museum of Norwich to look at a selection of old toys and had the chance to make one of their own.

We have learnt about money in a class toy shop and the children showed off their sewing skills by expertly designing and then making their own hand puppets.

In English we have been looking at different traditional tales and have used these to learn about story structure and character descriptions.

This fitted in well with National Storytelling week when we not only read and wrote stories in class, but enjoyed a visit from Prep 5 who were keen to share a selection of books they had chosen.



PREP 2

In Prep 2 this term The Great Fire of London has been the focus of our English and History lessons. Children have investigated the differences in life in the 17th and 21st Centuries.

They have designed posters for Fire Safety, made lists of items that they would take from the fire and written King Charles II's rules for a new London.

In DT, children have made fantastic models of houses in 17th Century style – some complete with bread ovens, residents and furniture.

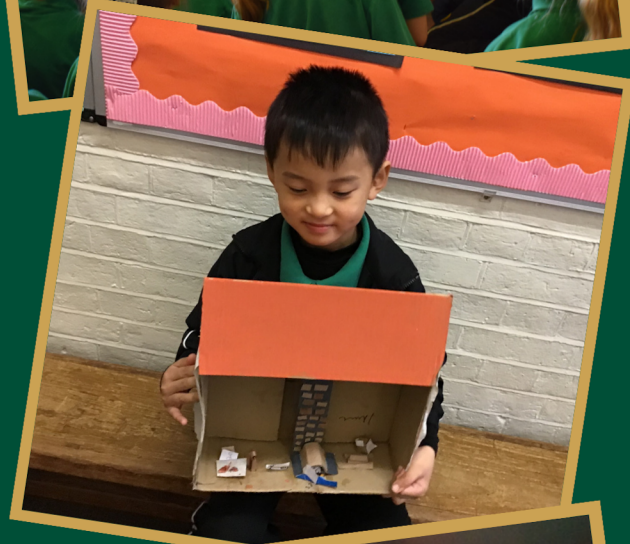
Our PSHE lessons began with us thinking about new things to try this year and our differences and similarities and the communities that we belong to.

In Maths, children have enjoyed lots of practical lessons learning about money before moving on to multiplication, division and times tables.

For RE, we have learnt parables and stories from both the Old and New Testament and designed new covers for a Children's Bible.

We have been learning about life cycles in Science and have created a colourful 3D display to show the life cycle of a butterfly to supplement our learning.

Prep 2 are always excited for their weekly swimming lesson and loved sharing favourite books for National Storytelling week.



PREP 3

In Prep 3 this term we have had a great time learning all about rocks and fossils, including performing a range of practical investigations including making our own wormy compost pots, and making our own sedimentary rocks! We have been studying British royalty since 1066, even taking the opportunity to make our own Tudor shields and staging the bloodthirsty battle of Notre Dame.

In Mathematics we have been working with our conceptual understanding of shape and fractions. In English we have been studying ancient Greek myths; understanding that myths change and adapt over time, eventually writing and illustrating our own "word of mouth" class version of the story of Icarus and Daedalus.

We have also spent a lot of time learning about climate change; what is happening to our planet and the choices that we can make together to help the Earth's recovery.

Prep 3 have maintained their excellent hard work so far this year, and the whole class should be really proud of what they are achieving.



PREP 4

Inspired by Eva Ibbotson's book, 'The Journey to the River Sea' Prep 4 have enjoyed exploring their topic of 'Rainforests' this half term. Extensive research and planning went into their non-chronological reports which has ended in some fantastic and informative writing. We will be sending off these reports to Steve Backshall MBE (of BBC's Deadly 60 fame!) and are hoping for a reply after half term.

Creative and practical skills have also been extensively used as Prep 4 crafted some beautiful Rainforest dioramas in groups of 3. These dioramas represent the different layers of the rainforest and what creatures and plants live in each layer. Junk modelling, painting, sculpting and computer technology skills were all used to make these projects come to life alongside a healthy dose of teamwork. The finished models look brilliant and have been displayed in our foyer by the library; please come and take a look!

With their hands-on and creative hats still on, Prep 4 have been busy learning lots about different insects and how to portray them using diverse artistic techniques. We have worked tremendously hard and produced team-built colourful mosaics, shadow puppets; and fabulous observational drawings!

What a fabulous term it has been so far!



PREP 5

Over the last few weeks, Prep 5 have enjoyed learning about the Ancient Greeks. A highlight to this topic has been writing and illustrating their own Greek myths for a class book: 'The Further Adventures' of Odysseus'.

This history topic has also been enhanced by creating some wonderful Greek inspired art, including theatre masks and vases and they have all become 'experts' on specific gods and aspects of Ancient Greek life.

Gaia, the Greek god of earth, was used as a starting point for all sorts of exciting activities when the children were at the Sainsbury Centre last week, including observational drawing, weaving, singing and drumming!

In computing, the children have also been practicing their typing, research and presentational skills by creating their own websites. This week, Safer Internet Day has been a fantastic catalyst for the children to engage in interesting conversations and sharing about their online life.

Other highlights throughout the year include learning about animal lifecycles in science, where the children have dissected eggs and propagated plants, amongst other activities.

During 'National Story Week', it was such a pleasure to hear to the children's own spoken stories, and to share stories with younger children in the school.



PREP 6

Prep 6 have worked incredibly hard this term on key writing and mathematical skills. In English, they rewrote an episode in our class novel, Skellig by David Almond, to include more description, tension and suspense. After editing and redrafting, all were "published" in a class book – and many are strong contenders for real publication! In Maths, they worked on mastering long multiplication and division using higher numbers before moving on to converting between imperial and metric measures, drawing line graphs and pie charts and finding mean averages and percentages.

History has taken us on a quest as we asked the question, "Why do we study the Maya?" The children came alive examining sources of evidence such as temples, carvings, writing and wall paintings, discussing and researching to justify their reasoning. Along the way, they created fantastic tourist guides to a Mayan city, wrote letters to the Mexican Archaeological Society and tried their hand at Mayan writing and Maths, also creating stunning Mayan masks in Art.

Science has involved the children devising group investigations into how varying components in a circuit effects the output. Meanwhile in RE, we have become experts on the Bible, exploring its different genres and comparing Gospels. Did you know the Feeding of the 5000 is the only miracle in all four Gospels?

Our PSHE and Computing have been interlinked this half term: learning about how to stay safe online complemented our work on the role of the media in stereotyping and staying connected to help our mental health – all key as the children prepare for moving to high school. We even learned to talk about our feelings in French in All about ourselves!

All in all, I want to congratulate Prep 6 on their enthusiasm and hard work, making it a fun term's teaching.





CROSS COUNTRY

Last week runners from Key Stage 2 tested their Cross Country skills at Norwich School.

Determination was the name of the game and we congratulate all who took part in this.

A special mention to the following runners for their extraordinary results finishing in the top 10:

Grace – Prep 3 – 7th

Soraya – Prep 3 – 8th

Sophia – Prep 4 – 2nd

Nathanael – Prep 6 – 2nd

Hot Off The Press!

The Finsborough School Cross Country race has taken place today and we congratulate Sophia and Nathanael who have qualified for places in the National Finals at Worksop College.