



HIGHGATE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headteachers' Newsletter

January 2024

Dear parents

Blink and it's gone! The month of January, and indeed the whole first half of the Spring Term, seems to have passed quicker than ever. Please take a moment over half term to sit down and read all about the things our children have been up to since the start of the new year.

Chinese New Year



Chinese New Year has been celebrated at Highgate Primary this week with the children enjoying a range of Chinese cultural activities which included paper-cutting, dragon-making and calligraphy. Today's lunch was a Chinese feast with fish bao, crispy carrot salad, garlicky bok choi, wonton soup and mandarin cake. What better way to round off the half term!

Cookery Studio

Lorraine and her team of budding chefs have been hard at work in the cookery studio preparing a range of delicacies and honing their culinary skills. As our Reception children have been busy exploring and adventuring this half term, they were definitely in need of an energy boost. Standing on stools to reach the worktop, they had great fun using a food processor to combine dates, coconut and cocoa powder to make Explorer Energy Balls which they formed using their hands, before coating them in even more yummy coconut.



Year 1 kick-started their weather-based topic by making fruity frozen yogurts; selecting, crushing, mashing and slicing different fruits and mixing them with yogurt. They used their sense of taste to decide how sweet they wanted their froyo to be and added just the right amount of honey. It was hard to have to wait for their popsicles to freeze, but well worth it and a welcome treat, whatever the weather!



Year 2 put their knowledge of how vehicles are constructed to good use when they designed and made their own vehicles out of fruit and vegetables. Bananas, turnips, carrots and potatoes were used to form the frame of their vehicle, to which fruit wheels were added on skewer axles. The best part was deconstructing their DT projects and eating them.

Y3 learnt how to make a popular Middle Eastern snack - hummus and flatbread. They followed step-by-step instructions to make the smoothest chickpea dip ever! They carefully pan fried their flatbreads and were really pleased with the results.

Y5 took on an ambitious challenge - to boil the perfect egg. But there was a twist to this dish - encasing their egg in a tasty and nutritious felafel casing and deep frying them to make vegetarian scotch eggs, now forever known as faleggles (name courtesy of Emma J's husband who kindly shared this recipe!)

Gardening News



The first signs of spring are starting to appear with the trees in bud, the hellebores in flower and the spring bulbs starting to emerge from the ground. Flo and her team of young gardeners have been busy getting ready for the new gardening year by clearing the ground and planting cyclamen, primroses and literally hundreds of daffodil bulbs kindly donated by Sunshine Garden Centre.



Sports News

The programme of friendly matches has continued this half term with some great performances by the football team against local rivals St Michaels. Congratulations to the Year 5 girls' team who drew 2-2 and to the Year 5 boys' team who cruised to an outstanding 3-1 win. It was a fun-filled competition, and we were happy to return victorious.



We have also been making our way through the first ever Highgate Primary table tennis competition. A whopping 88 children entered and over a series of knock-out rounds, we are now down to the final stages with one quarter final to play before we reach the semis. Well done to all the children who have taken part, and we're already looking forward to starting all over again!



Nursery



As ever, it's been a fun-filled half term in Nursery where we have welcomed ten new children and their families. Our joiners have been busy exploring and making new friends – a big thank you to all the friendly helping hands that our existing group has shown to help our new arrivals settle in.



This half term, we have been learning about different forms of transport. Among other things, the children have designed fabulous collage hot air balloons, sponged airplane stencils and immersed themselves in the local 143 bus role-play area. To cap it all off, we have spent this week learning all about the Lunar New Year of the Dragon. Well done on a super start to 2024 Nursery!

Reception



The whole world has been our oyster in Reception as the children have become intrepid explorers in our topic 'Explorers and Adventurers'. The children began the term by reading the wonderful book 'The Great Explorer' by Chris Judge. They then became authors of their own explorer books, writing about where they would like to go on their own adventure around the world or even into space. They drew beautiful illustrations and had fascinating conversations about all the places that they would like to visit.



Very excitingly the children got to put into practice everything they had learnt about adventuring on their first ever Forest School trips to Highgate Woods. They braved the wintery weather and made magic wands, found the jumping through tree, built paths and homes for bugs and enjoyed delicious hot chocolate.

Year 1



If you'd like an accurate weather forecast for the half term holiday, just ask any child in Year 1. Our topic, 'Whatever the Weather' has produced a cohort of enthusiastic meteorologists. We started the year creating a weather station in the Peace Garden including a windsock, weathervane, rain gauge, thermometer and an anemometer, with our meteorologists of the day completing a reading each morning. The lowest temperature recorded was minus one when the pond froze over and thick frost on the ground. We were expecting both Storm Jocelyn and Storm Isha and are still hopeful for at least a light snow shower before spring arrives. Excitement levels reached a new high on our kite flying trip to Parliament Hill as the children turned the grey London skies into a rainbow of kites. It inspired some wonderful wind poetry which was featured in today's magical weather performance led by Kate Stilitz. For the record, you can expect light rain showers and a moderate breeze in North London next week with sunny intervals on Tuesday and Wednesday.



Year 2



Year 2 have been learning all about different forms of transport this half term. It started with building their own balloon-powered cars and racing them around the classroom. They have investigated transport maps and made their own of the classroom, playground, local area and even of an imaginary world! They have designed fruit vehicles and made them in the cookery studio to great success! The topic culminated in a trip around London including traveling on the Emirates Skyline, the Thames River Boat, the DLR and the Elizabeth Line. A great way to end a fantastic topic!

Year 3



This half term, Year 3 has been immersed in the world of the Ancient Egypt. The children have learned how the River Nile shaped everyday life and how the geography of Egypt influenced the development of this extraordinary civilization. They have read Egyptian myths, made Egyptian jewellery and papyrus and have learned how to mummify a body, should they ever need to. They shared their knowledge in two spectacular class assemblies and rounded off the topic with an exciting trip to see some of the treasures of Ancient Egypt at the British Museum.

Year 4



Salve, omnes! In Year 4 it's been a half term of aqueducts, hypocausts, politics and of course, war. The children travelled back in time to the first century CE to Londinium, in Roman Britannia. The children had an audience with a Roman soldier, studied Rome's transition from republic to empire, learned about the impact of the Romans on our land and language and visited the remains of Verulamium, a major Roman city. They even

programmed sound effects for gladiatorial battle. It has been a great opportunity to look at history from different perspectives by examining the Roman invasion from the point of view of the Romans and the native Celts.

Year 5



Year 5 has packed a huge amount into their topic 'Our Place in Space'. The classroom walls are adorned with incredible rocket art and sci-fi masterpieces have been written featuring excellent descriptions of alien worlds. The classes have been to the Science Museum to experience moon dust, planetariums, telescopes and 3D film. Back at school, the children have made planetary cake pops, freeze-dried food, built computer-designed bases for Mars and made re-entry machines. There's even been time to create, rehearse and perform a memorable show which was quite literally out of this world.



Year 6



For their topic, The Body in Question, Year 6 took immense pride in researching, writing and illustrating reports on the human circulatory system. They learned how to take a pulse and explored the impact that exercise has on heart rate. This was all brought to life with a visit from a parent who is a member of the London Ambulance Service. She showed us close-up how the heart is monitored in emergency situations and told us about careers in the NHS. Our trip to Europe's oldest existing surgical operating theatre was another highlight, although a few of the children became a little nauseous as they heard how operations were conducted in Victorian times. Unsurprisingly perhaps, since the Victorians thought infection was spread by smells, the hospital conditions were filthy. We also learned that amputations were conducted in double quick time - often less than 3 minutes - because there was no anaesthetic. Ouch. For a final hands-on experience to round off our topic, the children dissected real hearts in the classroom.

PSA News



Last Friday, the school hosted its first ever Co-Headteachers Quiz. Parents and staff rose to the various challenges which this year included chocolate tasting, celebrity spotting in Highgate Village and a particularly fiendish music round. There was a great atmosphere, everyone had a lot of fun and with the bar, entrance tickets and the envelope game, the event raised over £1300. Thank you to everyone who attended for entering into the spirit.

Coming up...

The PSA is planning a super fun and special event for World Book Day, inspired in the book 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Make a note of the date - Thursday 7th March – for the traditional dressing up day, a Book Swap and the chance to win a golden ticket.

The PSA is now looking for prizes such as theatre or cinema tickets or vouchers. If you have any connections with venues that can donate them for this event, please get in touch with your class rep. Thank you!

And only a day later, it's our One World Evening. Please pop Friday 8th March in the diary for our not-to-be-missed cultural celebration with the whole family. You can expect lots of great music, great food from around the world and a fun disco for the children. More details will follow.

And finally

Thank you all for your support during an exceptionally busy and rewarding half term. Have a good break. We look forward to welcoming the children back on Monday 19th February.

With best wishes

William and Becca

William Dean
Co-Headteacher

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