



# Bollington Cross C.E. Primary School Newsletter

### Dear Families,

I am writing this Newsletter from a Primary Headteacher's Conference in Chester. My day has been inspiring, thought provoking and engaging. The keynotes have been at times positive and a reminder of the privilege of being a school leader, but have also looked at the realistic pictures around finances and SEND provision in Cheshire East—both of which are challenging across the region but also across the country. In 23 years in education, I have always felt that time spent cursing the constraints in the education sector is wasted energy. For me it is about striving to ensure that young people in our setting get the education they deserve, whilst operating within any constraints that the sector experiences. In a way, that was my message to pupils last week during our Mental Health collective worship—which focused on giving our headspace and positive actions to the things we can control rather than worrying about the things that are not under our control. I'm sure you'll agree that a focus on this is a healthy way to reduce our anxiety or worries in life and role-modelling this to children is essential.

We have managed to cram a lot into a Spring 1<sup>st</sup> Half-Term, though it started belatedly due to the icy and snowy conditions. Fortunately, this weather has given way to mean the rest of the half term has been mild by comparison and relatively dry—giving lots of opportunity for our pupils to get creative with their new loose-parts play equipment. The creativity they have shown has been amazing and it has led to greater engagement and less squabbles at lunch times. The children have built shops, stages, cars, boats, roads, castles and many other brilliant creations. Yesterday, I watched as Year 6 built a fab obstacle course and challenged themselves one-by-one to traverse it. This was great to see as they were having to dynamically risk-assess the course as they used it. This is truly where loose parts play gives one of its most valuable experiences to pupils—allowing them to take risks in a safe environment. My thanks to Miss Purcell and Mrs Smith who have been the driving force behind this initiative. The children love the equipment. (continued over the page)



**Continued....** Our pupils have worked incredibly hard around school and there have been lots of celebrations of their achievements, whether through dojo, collective class rewards or coming to visit me to show off their hard work.

As a staff this half-term we have invested some time in reflecting together on our Behaviour Policy and our Feedback policy and I am always so proud to hear staff talk, with such passion and knowledge, about our pupils in order to get the best from them in every lesson and every day. Once out of draft form we will share these policies with pupils and of course parents. During our INSET (Feb 24th) day, staff will work on a number of things including our curriculum, our SEND provision and undertake some training on how secure and insecure attachment impacts on behaviour and learning.

Thank you to all those who went to the informal PTA ideas gathering meeting this week. It sounds like there were some really exciting ideas shared which I am looking forward to putting into action alongside the PTA. I am really sorry that I couldn't be there but glad that I've already been able to hear about how successful it was. Please keep a keen eye on any future PTA messages to find out how you can support.

I wish you all a lovely weekend and half-term break and look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday 25th February. Best wishes, Yenson Donbavand

## Celebrating our faith

This half-term we have enjoyed a real mix of faith experiences. We launched the year by celebrating Epiphany. We reflected on 'doing the work of Christmas' now that the celebrations were over. Children created crowns, highlighting the values that they intend to take forward, as well as presenting their prayers and intentions in church.

As well as reflecting on current affairs with links to Christian values, we have also championed 'perseverance' across the half-term. Children have reflected on how to persevere with their own goals as well as ways to support and reward others who persevere. We also enjoyed the launch of a new tradition at Bollington Cross – Candlemas! St Oswald's and the PTA invited the entire school community to bring a candle to church where families received a blessing, with a reflection on how we, like candles, can shine light in the darkness. A huge thank you to everyone involved and a special thank you to everyone who donated and bought cakes.

Next half-term we look forward to launching student leadership where children will have the opportunity to organise and lead worship opportunities around school. For more information about faith and worship at Bollington Cross, please visit our ['faith page'](#) online. If you would like to support with faith initiatives in school, we would love to welcome you. Please message Mr Etherington for details.



## A message from the School Office

Please make sure you are up to date with any payments for services or meals which you have already had. Where possible, please pay in advance on-line on ParentMail for future bookings required, this will support the office. We are eager to move to a cashless system in school as soon as we can, so anything you can do to begin using cash less to pay for things will help us move in this direction. If you are in financial difficulty, or struggling to pay for something, please talk to Mrs Nelson in the office and she will work with you in making an agreed payment plan. We are having an upgrade to the door-release system at the front of school over the half-term. Hopefully, this will mean a less temperamental system and quicker entry to school for parents once they have been seen at the door. At the same time as this we will move to a VOIP telephone system and therefore more reliable and clearer phone lines too. Mrs Nelson is grateful for the lovely welcome the community has given her and she has settled into the school team really well.



## Learning in Reception

Despite being a short half term, we have managed to pack in lots of lovely learning!

Here are some highlights:

- Learning about Superheroes and what makes us strong and healthy!
- Lots of muddy fun in the the forest!
- Eric the Elephant choosing a friend to go home with each Friday!
- Knowing Ourselves and Growing Ourselves in Mental Health Week – finding out about our strengths, thinking about special people in our lives, finding ways to look after our mental health and discovering ways to help to keep calm
- Going to our first swimming lesson together!! The children have been so excited!

Thank you for another great half term! Have a wonderful break!



Eric the Elephant's Big Adventures!



## Learning in Year 5

In Year 5 we have been exploring the fantastic story of Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskerville. The children have thoroughly enjoyed creating a suspense-filled narrative that left their readers on a cliffhanger. Within History, we have been exploring the Ancient Greeks. We have investigated the philosophers, Greek gods and created our own Pottery based on Ancient Greek pots. In Science, we have been looking at properties of materials and exploring the changes to matter. We have conducted many experiments to witness these changes occurring. In Computing, the children have thoroughly enjoyed using Scratch to create music inspired by Space. In RE, we have been exploring the topic of 'What makes a good leader' through the religion of Islam.



Tuesday March 4th at 7pm Location: Bollington Cross School Hall

I am pleased to announce that in Partnership with Lucy Griffiths (Sensory Wise Owls) we are putting on an event to offer insight and advice to any parents in the area whose children have meltdowns or processing challenges after the school day. This will be a pay-as-you-feel event for any local parent. Please pop it in your calendar and book your place on the following link....

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/post-school-dropout-dysregulation-tickets-1249272400379?aff=oddtcreator>



## Mental Health Week

Pupils engaged in various activities for Children's Mental Health Week. Based on the theme of 'Know yourself, Grow Yourself' they enjoyed some yoga, mindfulness exercises and created pictures of 'well being' trees; thinking about their roots, their important people, and their favourite things!



## Learning in Year 3

Well what a half term! We were really busy the first week of half term- having fun in the snow! Everyone shared their adventures. It was great to see the variety of structures.

We had a great time finally connecting with our penfriends from Dean Valley. We enjoyed actually meeting them and some of us made a lot more friends. We can't wait to visit them at their school.

