



# Bollington Cross C.E. Primary School Newsletter



Dear Families,

It has been a very busy half-term which has flown by, as we ensure that pupils are receiving much needed teaching to continue to support their progress and learning since school closures, particularly in English and Maths – key subjects which unlock the rest of the curriculum. Whilst doing this, we are also ensuring the pupils are benefiting from a broad curriculum, which we feel prepares them for life as happy and confident, continuous learners.

It is important that we remember that all of the adults in our community set the example as learners and that our children see us all as learners. Professor Guy Claxton and Alister Bryce-Clegg, both spoke at length at the Headteacher's Conference I attended this week in Chester. Both are well respected in their fields regarding learning and early childhood development. It was so inspiring to listen to them share their philosophies and reassuring to be thinking back to life here at school and how our teachers put well-researched approaches into action to get the best out of our pupils every day. I do recommend looking Guy's Blog and at Alister's Blog 'ABC Does' (this one much more tailored to Early Years Development):

<https://www.guyclaxton.net/blog>  
<https://abctoes.com/abc-does-a-blog/>

As adult learners ourselves, how often do we step out of our comfort zone? We ask children to do that, and feel it, every day in the way we challenge them, but do we as adults practise that too? My two most recent big steps out of my comfort zone were in beginning to learn how to play the drums and how to skateboard (I know you are thinking 'midlife crisis'). Both of these experiences have enabled me to feel the thrill of learning a new skill, whilst providing the incredible challenge which supports growth. What will the grown-ups in our school community try to learn, which takes them beyond their comfort zone? I am sure some of you already do this. If so, well done for showing your children that we too make mistakes, and grow from them. We too get things wrong and reflect on different approaches and try again. We too feel a little less anxious each time we develop our confidence a little in a new area of learning. Thank you all for being good role-models outside school to your children by showing them that we are all learning, every day, with varying degrees of success and that resilience grows when we test it. Have a brilliant half term and thank you all for your support.

*Mr Donbavand*

We have been expressing ourselves and celebrating our Uniqueness at Bollington Cross! We Raised **£143.85** for the Place 2 Be Charity! Even Caretaker Craig got involved!



## Learning in Reception

What a busy half term we have had in Reception! We have enjoyed learning about "what's above me?" We have learned about the planets in the solar system, what makes night and day, which animals come out at night, as well as looking at beautiful art work by Vincent Van Gogh of "A Starry Night." The children produced their own amazing starry nights using similar techniques such as thick paint and swirls. We have enjoyed lots of time in the Forest and were inspired to make bird feeders – we hope to see lots of birds coming to feed! We have also continued to work on our personal and social skills, in particular, perseverance – in Reception we call it being a "Persevering Parrot!" We have been looking out for times when children are trying hard and not giving up when something is tricky. We have also been working on our communication skills by working with our new Learning Partners – we listen carefully to one another and help each other with our learning. Our Stage Stories continue to be very popular, helping to boost our language and storytelling skills as well as confidence. Our VIP this half term has been Mae Jemison, the first black woman to visit space – she was most certainly a Persevering Parrot and didn't give up on her dream!



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## Learning in Year 1

Our topic this term is 'Moon Zoom' and we were stunned to find a spacecraft had crashed in the playground! We found lots of clues and brought them back to the classroom. Had an alien landed at school? Over the weeks, we have found a letter from an alien called Sporkle, designed space rockets, and drawn our own aliens accompanied with an acrostic poem. We've also been learning about famous astronauts, astronomers and astrophysicists. Hopefully we will be able to help Sporkle get back home!







## Always looking for ways to improve

Though I am now into my fifth academic year as Headteacher of such an amazing school, I still vividly remember my interview and one question in particular, "What is your biggest fear?" My answer was that I fear standing still, ticking-over, not learning and not improving. These things are not in my nature. At Bollington Cross, I am fortunate to be surrounded by people young and... less-young who feel the same. We are always striving to improve our surroundings, how we do things, our outcomes, our mental and physical health and our characteristics for continuous learning.

Under our School improvement section on the website, you can read more about our priorities for the current academic year and the different ways in which we are striving to make sure that every child gets the education they deserve and the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, be a successful and positive member of society and find their passions in life. These current priorities include, closing the educational attainment gap, catching up on lost learning, continuing to improve our teaching of Reading and Writing, Improving further our provision for SEND pupils and also the opportunities for our Subject leaders to become even more effective with good opportunities for CPD. If you would like to read more about how we have improved and how we are seeking to improve, including our implementation of Read Write Inc, please follow the following link:

<http://www.bollingtoncross.cheshire.sch.uk/page/school-improvement/41703>

If you are interested in our outcomes they can be compared to other local schools they can be looked at and analysed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>

Though this data was last updated in 2019, it shows that whenever a child starts at our school and no matter their background, they make good progress. Progress is a more meaningful measure of a school's provision than just attainment, as this can be skewed by the ability profile of a cohort.

We have also worked very hard to improve our surroundings, including a complete revamp of the playground and a new all-weather playing surface. Our next improvement is inside the small hall, as we begin to ensure that it becomes two, learning spaces, both able to be timetabled and used separately and at the same time. The plasterboard and studding arrived (in the rain) today and we are very excited about how this space will eventually be revolutionised. Work begins tomorrow! We will, once we have a partition wall, begin to use the Helen Royal Memorial Fund to make this an amazing space, which will have a brilliant impact on many young pupils. Watch this space!



## The end of an era. The beginning of a new chapter!

Miss Bennett has announced in school that she plans to retire at the end of this school year. After nearly 25 years at the school, many of them teaching Year 6, Miss Bennett will have a well-earned, enjoyable and exciting change. We know how much she loves Bollington Cross and how much so many colleagues, pupils, ex-pupils and parents love her too! In my 20 odd years of teaching I have met many lovely teachers and amazing characters who create life-long memories for children—and Miss B is certainly one of them! We will have, and use, many opportunities to let her know exactly how we feel and the great impact she has had at this school over such a successful period of her career, before she leaves in July. Today though, I just wanted to make you aware of her decision and upcoming change.



## Learning in Year 2

Class 2 have been immersed in their topic Wriggle and Crawl. We have been further developing our art skills and writing for different purposes and audiences. We have also looked at the local artist, Charles Tunnicliffe, and created our own pieces of art in that style. This was entered into a competition run by Macclesfield Library. (So fingers crossed some of ours may be chosen!) During lessons in our forest we explored with our friends; looking at micro-habitats! We also progressed our cutting skills to celebrate Chinese New Year by creating a dragon. Well done Year 2!



## Learning in Year 5

This half term has involved lots of practical work in Maths and Science for Year 5: in Maths we are making scale models of the classroom furniture – this has involved plenty of careful measuring, dividing these measurements by 10 and then using various techniques to create the models out of paper. The children have really enjoyed the 'hands-on' aspect of this activity.

In Science, we have been looking at Materials and their Properties, and have planned and carried out investigations into absorbency, insulation and dissolving. I was really impressed with the children's ability to plan fair tests. Our history work has focused on 'propaganda and portraiture': a really effective activity was to see if we could identify Henry VIII in a police lineup!



Which portrait is the 'real' Henry VIII? Pupils are using what they know of images of him to make a reasoned guess.