Birkrigg – Autumn 2

Welcome back to school and a new half term. The children seemed to enjoy their trip to Brockhole at the end of last half term and the weather was quite kind to us despite the forecast! They made a few things with the staff there including a leaf printed squirrel picture, a bug house and a squirrel mask. The mask and the eyes need cutting out and the staff have provided a piece of elastic so that children can wear their mask if they would like to.

Our topic this half term is **Colour;** this links very well with our trip when we were looking at the colours of Autumn.

Literacy

The children are enjoying our daily Phonics session learning the letter sounds, how to blend them to read words and how to write their letters correctly. In addition, we have started reading practice sessions with the children in small groups. To start with, these books are wordless where we talk about the pictures and play I-Spy to practise initial sound recognition but gradually we are beginning to introduce books with words. As a class, we will be reading several stories related to colour including 'Elmer the Elephant', 'The Princess and the Wizard' and 'The Mixed-Up Chameleon' as well as the Autumn themed book, 'The Leaf Thief' that was introduced at Brockhole. We will practise our writing with activities linked to these stories, beginning with simple captions and ending with simple sentences.

Maths

We are going to be doing lots of activities relating to numbers to 5 to gain a deep understanding of them, including their composition, for example, 3 can be composed of 1 and 1 and 1, or 2 and 1, and so on. We are also going to look at shapes, firstly circles and triangles, then later in the term, shapes with 4 sides.

Understanding the World

To begin our half term, we are going to find out about Bonfire Night and Remembrance Day and their place in history. We will also spend some time looking at the Hindu festival of Diwali. Later in the half term we will explore Advent and different Christmas traditions that families might have.

We are going to continue thinking about Autumn and seasonal changes as we approach Winter. We will learn about hibernation, and we will also think about nocturnal animals. Linked to our topic of colours, we will find out all about camouflage, what animals use camouflage and why.

RE

This half term, we are thinking about why we celebrate Christmas. We will start by looking at birthdays and what kind of things we do to celebrate them. We will look at the Christmas Story and how we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

PSE

We will keep revisiting our class charter that we talked about in class in September and how our behaviour can affect others. We talk about kind and unkind behaviour and how we are all unique. We will learn about respect and how to respect each other. We use a lovely poem called 'The Crayon Box that Talked' to illustrate this.

Music

This half term the unit is called 'My Stories'.

Expressive Arts and Design

There are still opportunities daily for the children to explore drawing and painting independently. Together we are going to explore colour mixing and incorporating shapes in our artwork, looking at paintings by the artist Kandinsky. We will have art and design projects linked to different celebrations at this time of year – bonfire night pictures, making diva lamps out of clay and then decorating them, and of course, Christmas! The children will also get a chance to make and model with salt dough.

Computing

The children enjoy using the 'mini mash' section of Purple Mash and we will continue to provide opportunities in the classroom to have a go at the paint projects on mini mash linked to our topic. We have set up folders, called 'trays' on mini mash so this half term the children will be reminded how to save their work into these trays before they exit the site so that they can open their work another time and look at their creations again. We also encourage children to use '2 Handwrite' to practise their letter formation and the Phonics activities in the reading and writing area on the home screen.

PE

We will continue to have two hall times on a Tuesday, and Wednesday. This half term we have a gymnastics unit and a unit incorporating fundamental PE skills.

As last half term, weather permitting, we also hope to use the bikes and scooters on the school playground and get out onto the school field at least weekly.

Please can you ensure that your child always has a waterproof coat in school. A pair of wellies would also be particularly useful for wet weather.

The children will continue to bring home a new reading book every Thursday as this is the day the children have the last of their three school reading group sessions, We will also change books on a Monday if your child has read that book regularly over the weekend. Please comment in your child's reading journal if you have heard your child read – just a simple remark about whether they enjoyed the book, their favourite part, if they found anything easy/difficult, etc. School library books will be changed on a Tuesday.

If you have any further questions, please come and speak to one of us at the beginning or end of the school day.

Miss Turner and Mrs Edmondson