



An Daras Trust  
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

# St Stephens Community Academy Fortnightly Family Newsletter



Friday 19th March 2021

**“ Embracing Learning; Inspiring Ambition;**

**Mrs. Maura Furber -Headteacher**



Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been truly wonderful to have all the children back and perfect that our school value this week has been ‘Happiness’. It also seems only fitting that this Friday is being celebrated with the children wearing bright colours to celebrate International Happiness Day and Red Nose Day. Many thanks for your kind donations, as a school we have raised a wonderful amount for this very worthwhile charity. This is very much appreciated especially in the current situation that we find ourselves in. Last week was British Science Week and you will see a small example of all the amazing learning that has been happening across the school in this newsletter. Don’t forget to check out the class blogs and Twitter feed to find out more about what your children have been up to. Several of you have asked me about what ‘level’ your child is working at and what you can do to help them now they are back at school. Before we break up for Easter your child’s teacher will give you a mini paper report on their strengths and areas to target together. There will be no national testing this school year. We will also give you a full end of year report before the end of the summer term. Based on our in school assessments and observations. Don’t hesitate to get in touch if you need further information.

Take care and stay safe . *Maura Furber*

## School Improvement

This week I have had the pleasure of visiting each class to observe the children working and discuss with them what helps them ‘learn’! As a staff we are so struck with their determination to impress us and try their very best. We know this second lockdown has been much trickier than the first for so many of the children and we are working to support their stamina and meet deadlines whilst giving them time to revisit prior knowledge and talk about what the next steps are. I’d like to share with you some of the things that they have told me help them to learn. These are very important to inform our planning and teaching styles; this honest communication will give them ownership and strategies to move their learning journey onwards.

- **“The teacher showing examples and giving us a different perspective to think about”.**
- **“Other children explaining their thinking and listening to the teacher.”**
- **“The buddy system –so if the teacher is helping someone else we don’t waste time because we can help each other understand a problem.”**
- **“Objects and pictures help me to learn more.”**
- **“When the teacher gives me examples and alternative methods to try and that helps me learn new skills.**
- **“The teacher giving me feedback. When we read through we can see if it needs improving”**
- **“The teacher asking me questions-it makes me think. “**
- **“The teacher using lots of descriptions, putting into context and letting us ask questions to help us understand more .”**
- **“Being given the time to think and work things out. I like that it’s not always a time limit.”**
- **“The teachers keep on motivating us and encourage us to try”**
- **“By making it fun.”**
- **“Teachers encouraging us to be independent, especially after home learning.”**

We will do this together.



### Welcome Back Team St Stephens

A very warm sunny welcome back to all our pupils at St Stephens Community Academy. The school has been filled with laughter and joy - just as it should be every day.

A huge thank you to our wonderful PTFA for funding the beautiful balloon arch across the entrance into the school playground. We wanted something special to let the children and families know how excited we were that we could all be back together.

Thank you also to Emily at 'Once in a blue balloon' for creating the 6ft arch in our school colours. As an eco school we are delighted that the balloons will be recycled when the time is right into eco bricks.



The picture is taken with the Year 6 House Captains and Youth Councillors representing all the pupils. You'll also see a copy of the photo and a write up in this weeks edition of 'The Post'. We are becoming regular fixtures in there!

### Red Nose Day and International Day of Happiness.

A HUGE thank you to all of you for the amazing effort that went into the 'wear something bright' day at school this Friday to celebrate these two important events. Being happy is a human right and we think its definitely worth celebrating here at St Stephens. It was like walking into a rainbow in each class!

Also a heartfelt thanks for your generous donations to the Red Nose Day charity -we know this is not the best time to be asking for donations and so really appreciate anything that you have been able to spare. The total to date is £106.65



Many thanks to our wonderful Pupil Forum who collected the donations in their own 'bubbles' and our Treasurer who counted and checked the total with a Year 6 friend. They now have the task of thinking of an event in the summer term to support our PTFA!

## British National Science Week

British Science Week is a ten-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths. The children across the school have been involved in a range of activities that provide an opportunity to engage with science and encourage scientific thinking. Have a look at some of the amazing learning that has been happening. We had booked Professor Bubbleworks to visit during this week and lead demonstrations however he had to postpone -we hope to see him in the summer term.



Exploring colour and light through stories in Class 7. This week the children have been listening to the story of Elmer and creating a colour patchwork to make him happy. Using tissue pieces in a laminated sheet it was exciting to see what happened when we held it up to the window. We found out all the light could shine through all the different colours.



In Class F the children investigated 'dancing raisins', made 'flitter jars', matched fabrics to a 'feely wall' and experimented with different types of liquids. Their final experiment involved rescuing a character frozen inside some ice! Great observing and predicting skills.



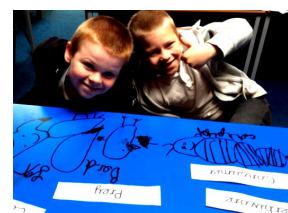
For Science Week, Year 1 have been exploring insects and designing our own Robo-bugs. Insects have evolved special features and abilities to help them survive in a variety of habitats. Our designs were inspired by a variety of insect features to solve and overcome specific challenges. We had to choose a specific goal and think about the challenges our Robo-bugs may have to overcome in order to achieve its goal. We then drew and labelled our Robo-bugs before bringing them to life using Play-doh!



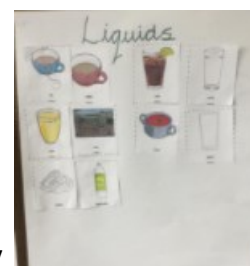
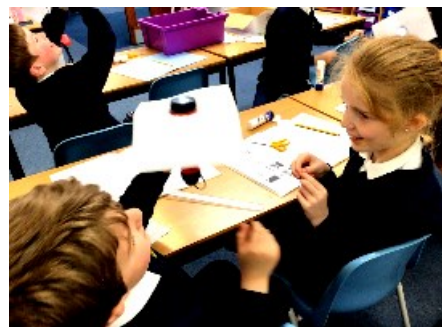
Following on from our science learning in Year 2 where we learnt about carnivores, herbivores and omnivores, we have been exploring food chains.

We answered the questions -

- What is a food chain?
- Where do humans fit into food chains?
- What is a producer?
- What is a consumer?
- What is a predator?
- What is prey?
- What happens if you remove part of a food chain?



In Year 3, our current theme is Light, Reflections and Shadows. We have been exploring light and dark and looking at reflective materials. We did an investigation where we tried to find the best reflective material to use on a school book bag. We found out that a shiny surface such as tin foil would make a great reflective strip on book bags and enable children to travel safely in the dark.

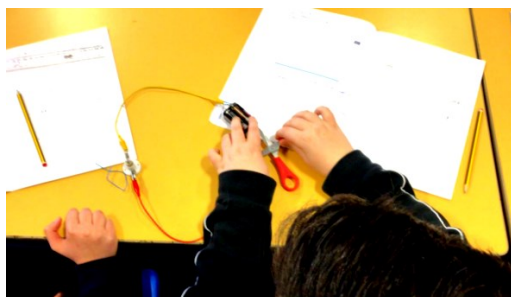


This Science week Year 4 have started the new theme of States of Matter. We have been learning about what they are and how to describe each one. We have then sorted objects into solids, liquids and gases. Next we discussed reversible and irreversible reactions and have begun to plan our first investigation to carry out next week, all about chocolate!

Year 5 are really enjoying forces. We have now built our parachutes for testing air resistance. We have looked at the different possible variables and chosen which one we want to test. All ready and built, next step is to test them!



In Year 6 the science investigations have been linked to Innovators and investigators.



**Great Scientific Enquiry by one and all.**

**Polite Reminder about dress code at school.**

Please can all children wear their school uniform into school **unless** it is a day when they will be taking part in Outside Learning/Wild Tribe or PE., including after school clubs.

We do not mind trainers being worn into school during this present time but do feel it is important that the children should be wearing their school uniforms to maintain the school expectations and community spirit.

Many thanks for your support.



**Planting Time -Our World**

In the Pre-School this week the children have been busy selecting and planting seeds. Our theme of growing is causing lots of excitement. We observed real concentration and determination as they selected what they wanted to plant, putting the soil into their pots and popping the seed carefully inside.

There were lots of key words and pictures to support their speaking and listening in this activity and we know they will be checking the greenhouse daily to see if anything has happened.

Fingers crossed.



**KEY:**

- |                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Happy and positive | - yellow |
| Sad/upset          | - brown  |
| Calm and peaceful  | - green  |
| Energetic          | - orange |
| Angry              | - red    |



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### 20 March - International Day of Happiness

This is your Happiness Tree. It has 31 leaves - one for each day of the month. Colour in each leaf depending on how you feel that day when you wake up or before you go to bed. The Happiness Tree is a great way of recording how your moods change each day. In a month's time, you will be able to track and see how you felt each day.

We hope you enjoy your Happiness Tree.