



Sheffield Lower School

Autumn 2 2024 Newsletter

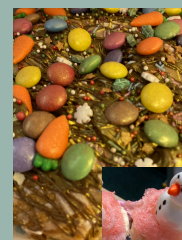
Message from the Headteacher

We have had a busy Autumn Term and the children continue to enjoy their classes. A Reception parent/carer information meeting was held this half term where we welcomed all of our new children and families. We have also held early reading workshops for this age group. We officially launched our new values last month and the children engaged in a range of activities as part of Community Heroes Week - culminating in exhibitions of their work. Next half term we look forward to our 'Healthy Me' week during National Children's Mental Health Week. We will have health professionals visiting and will be creating books of the children's work to go to local health organisations as part of our culture of exhibiting the children's work.

The children enjoyed the Santa Challenge where we encouraged them to walk, cycle or scoot to school - well done to our winner Emmy from Chestnut Class who won a scooter. We also celebrated Water House winning the house cup for this term with 8132 House points!



Our PSA have been extremely active this term and it has been lovely to see the children using the new stage for their festive performances. Funds this term go towards our curriculum theme weeks, a new house point token system (led by our House Team), our museum and more play equipment. The Bake Off saw some fantastic entries Well done to our winner Darcy, the funds from this (£182.50) will support new tech equipment to support performances. Sheffield Lower also was one of the top 10 Central Bedfordshire schools in Street Tag. We will be using our prize money to buy more sports equipment.



The children really enjoyed our annual pantomime, Jack & the Beanstalk, as well as Present Day which finished with a visit from Father Christmas who popped to every class to wish everyone a Happy Christmas. Our Early Years children also had a walk down to the post box with their letters to Santa. We had a successful Winter Fayre which made a record amount for the school.

The children and staff enjoyed a Christmas Dinner together this week wearing their Christmas jumpers. We would like to thank all of our parents and carers for engaging with the events this half term and for attending and supporting performances. We look forward to seeing everyone for our Community Carols later today.

We wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a fantastic New Year.





What have we been up to?



We have had another busy and productive half term in **Early Years**. We have been thinking about the ways in which we celebrate and mark different events, such as Diwali, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day and Christmas. We marked Anti-Bullying week by wearing our odd socks and sharing stories about being kind and respectful to one another. We also enjoyed taking part in the whole school Community Values week, where we all designed something that represented our own real life superhero.

In **Reception**, we have enjoyed taking part in 'Drawing Club' and are developing our mark making and early writing skills. We have continued to learn lots of new sounds in phonics, and in Maths, we have been consolidating our knowledge of numbers 1-5.

In **Cherry** Class, we have been adding some more poems to our 'Poetry Basket' and we have been playing lots of listening and sound games. We have been practising our subitising skills in Maths, and learning how to use our counting skills when following recipes.



Next half term, in **Reception**, we will be continuing to develop our knowledge of traditional tales and storytelling. We will also be learning about maps and our local area. In **Cherry** Class, we will continue to develop our mark making skills by introducing our 'Message Centre' to the classroom, and we will also be learning about and counting the different birds that we can see outside.

Many thanks, the Early Years team.

Year 1 have had another great term. We are now on the lead up to Christmas and have enjoyed our play rehearsals and performance. Each class were given songs to practise and some children were given lines to learn for the show. We loved the superhero day. The children enjoyed learning about different types of heroes and had the opportunity to show their work to a local hero. We carried out these activities through More and Explore.

After Christmas, children will be given spellings and Numbot logins. The children will be sent home with a list of spellings and they will be tested at the end of the week. Holly will have Forest School next half term on a Thursday. The children will need to come in clothes that are appropriate for the woods. Thank you for reading with your child at home, we have seen an increase in this! Any questions, please speak to your class teacher.

Many thanks, the Year 1 Team.





What have we been up to?



In **Year 2** this term we have had so much fun with our learning! In English we have been learning about writing for different genres. We have written diary entries, letters and fact files. The children created some wonderful fact files about a community hero that inspired them. A lot of them chose their own family members! In maths we have been learning all about money, understanding the value of coins, adding amounts and finding change. We have also learned about multiplication and had great fun creating arrays using paint and cotton buds! We have continued our foundation subjects learning through 'Explore and More'. In our D.T week we learned about the different types of puppets and we then designed, made and evaluated our own puppets! In R.E we learned about different celebrations for different religions and enjoyed exploring this in a very creative way! In our science we learned about microhabitats and took our learning outside to our forest area to find microhabitats within our school habitat! We are very much looking forward to next term where we will be starting our Titanic and Great Fire of London topics!

Many thanks, the Year 2 team 😊



In **Year 3**, we have been having so much fun at Forest School this term, where we have been learning about building different shelters. We have also been using our Science investigative skills to explore the soil there too and we discovered it was a clay type so it can be easily moulded into different shapes, such as reindeers. We have been very busy writing fact files about Mary Anning and using our computer skills to type up some of our facts; using headings and subheadings. We have enjoyed practising our Christmas songs ready for our performance which we hope you enjoyed! Next term we will be learning all about the Ancient Egyptians and rivers. It will also be the countdown to swimming lessons. Lots of exciting stuff to look forward to!

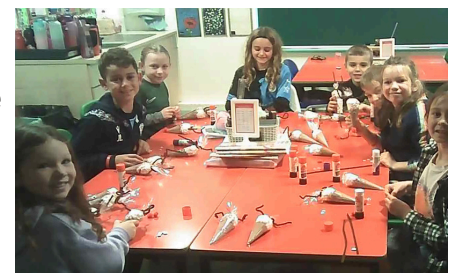
Many thanks, the Year 3 team.

Wow! What a busy half-term it has been in **year 4**! The children have really enjoyed learning about the Anglo-Saxons in History and Geography this term, as well as discovering the different versions of Beowulf. Year 4 are excited to share with you our writing progress stories linked to this unit in January. Our pupil leadership teams met with our governors to explain their responsibilities and have really stepped up to the different roles. The House Team helped to create and sell hot chocolate cones for the PSA Winter Fair (see photo). In Art, we have enjoyed showing our sketching skills, as well as our sculpting skills as we designed and created our own dragon eyes. These look amazing! Our winter displays have shown our hard work with poetry and some super art skills too. We hope you all enjoyed our Winter show as well, with a strictly come dancing theme.

Thank you for all your support with our home learning too. We appreciate any support you can give your child with times table practice up to 12 times table, as this will help us prepare for the MTC assessment in June. Year 4s now have a top ten league table, as well as a weekly class trophy to add a bit of competition to our times table practice.

Next term, we will be learning about World War II. Children really enjoy the family historical links in this unit and it is a firm favourite theme. We will also be starting to plan for our residential trip and will have a meeting in the early part of the spring term to share further details about Kingswood. We wish everyone a festive Christmas break and look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year.

Thank you, the Year 4 team 😊





Community Update



Remembrance: Our children proudly represented the school at both the Shefford Remembrance Parade and on Armistice Day along with the Town Council. Thank you to all involved.

School Parliament: Our School Parliament attended a leadership summit along with the other schools in Shefford to discuss and share concerns across all the schools. They had a great time and came back full of some positive actions to move forward and make changes to our school environment. They will be working alongside our Eco-Council to achieve this.

Eco-Council: Our Eco-Council were fortunate to have a visit from some members of Shefford WI who are involved in measuring the quality of the water in our local rivers and learned how to support the community to look after our rivers.

Parent Forums: Thank you to all the parents who attended our forum on clubs this half term and completed the resulting survey. Some actions have already been put in place and more detail around this will follow shortly. Our next Parent Forum is on **Monday 27th January** and we will be looking at **communication**.

Local Heroes: A huge thank you to all parents/carers for supporting our work around local heroes and the launch of our new values. This was really successful, and the children loved meeting real life heroes and sharing their work with many of you.

Volunteers: We have several volunteers in school now supporting our children with reading, forest school and local walks in the community. A huge thank you to all of them for their help this term. We really appreciate it. If you do not yet volunteer and would like to be involved in some way, then please get in touch through the school office.

Global Majority: We would really like to set up a group of parents to work alongside us to ensure that children from all ethnicities and cultures feel truly valued and represented in school. If you would be happy to be involved in this, please contact Mrs Freeman via the school office.



OPAL Update

We are continuing to develop our play curriculum to enhance opportunities for children at breaktimes and lunchtime. Our new storage shed is working well, and we are continuing to develop play areas and resources. We would really welcome any donations of the following items that you are able to spare or source:

Waistcoats, hats, cable reels – any size, pushchairs, walking frames, wheelchairs, crutches, walking sticks and small spades for digging.

Please can parents/carers also ensure that their child has wellies in school to allow them to access all areas.

We are planning to create a sandpit area on our field over the next few months – if anyone feels they would be able to support us in making this happen please do get in touch with Mrs Freeman via the school office.

Wellies: Children are only able to play on the field if they have wellies in school. We are fortunate that wellie storage stands are being made for us and we are gradually getting more of these in school and will soon have one per class. Please make sure that your child has some wellies they can use in school every day.



Family Support

Thank you so much to all our parents who supported our coat giveaway. We are looking to do the same with Wellies in the new year.



If you have any suggestions of ways we can help you as a Family Support Team, please let us know. By either contacting us directly:

familysupport@shefford.cbeds.co.uk via the school office
schooloffice@shefford.cbeds.co.uk or by talking to your child's class teacher.

While Christmas can be magical time for some it can also bring added stress and anxiety. Please see below some information that may be useful at this time.

<https://family-action.org.uk/self-help/managing-tensions-in-the-family-at-christmas/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-and-mental-health/>



If you think a child you know is being harmed, or at risk of being harmed, please contact the Access and Referral Hub on 0300 300 8585 during office hours or 0300 300 8123 out of office hours who can talk to you about your concerns.

Merry Christmas
& A Happy New Year!
from Shefford Lower School

