DURHAM
BLUE COAT SCHOOL

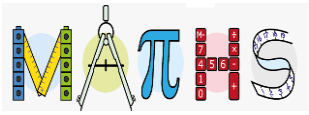
Year 4 Autumn Term Update

A Message from the Class Teachers

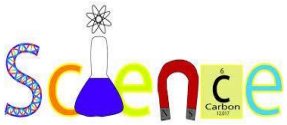
Welcome to Year 4! Miss Richardson and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the children and we are very impressed with how well they have started settling into the routines!



We are currently writing an imaginative adventure story based on a book called 'The Great Chocoplot'. In this text a chocopocalpyse has been forecast with an end to all chocolate seeming inevitable! As you can imagine, this has captured the imaginations of the children.



The term has started with a unit on place value which ensures that the children have a secure knowledge of numbers before we build on this and move onto a unit based on addition and subtraction. In this unit the children will continue to build on their understanding of making exchanges in column addition/subtraction.
We will also be having a focus on times tables facts, and this will continue throughout the year. Towards the end of year 4 the children will take part in the Multiplication Tables Check, as stipulated by the government, The expectation is that children will know facts up to 12 x 12 in a speedy manner. Any support you can offer your child in developing a swift recall of times table facts would be greatly appreciated whether this be games, songs, puzzles etc. We have found that children who know their times tables well find other aspects of maths easier e.g. formal multiplication methods, fractions etc.



The term began with some introductory work about the skills that scientists use and the types of jobs that scientists might have. Our first full unit is on the topic of electricity. The children will develop an understanding of safety around electricity and they will explore how to make electric circuits that light up a bulb, spin a motor or make a buzzer buzz.

Religious Education

This term, our RE lessons will explore our core question: “What does it mean to be a Sikh in Britain today?”. To investigate this, pupils will work as theologians, sociologists, and philosophers as they learn to:

- Make sense of Sikh beliefs: We will look at core beliefs such as the belief in one God, the teachings of Guru Nanak, equality, and service (*seva*). Children will also explore the Mool Mantar and see how these foundational texts shape Sikh life.
- Understand the impact: Pupils will connect the lives of key figures—such as Guru Nanak (and the practice of *langar*) and Guru Gobind Singh (and the *Khalsa*)—to how Sikhs practice their faith today through community service, hard work, and devotion.
- Make connections: Children will have the opportunity to discuss key values like equality and honest work, considering why these matter today and reflecting on which values could make a positive difference in their own lives and the wider world.

Throughout this unit, we will also reflect on our school vision's big question: *“How can we find the courage to defend someone from another religion or background when they are being treated unfairly or unkindly by others?”.*



In history this term, we will be answering the question, ‘Why did the Romans march through County Durham?’. We will begin by enquiring how the Roman Empire expanded through Europe. We will then explore how and why the Romans invaded Britain. Next, we will study the reasons for the success of the Roman army before finally unravelling the reasons why the Romans marched through our local area and even settled in forts like Binchester.



In geography this term, the children will learn about the continent they live on. Pupils will locate European countries and capitals on a map, identify human and physical characteristics and compare geographical similarities and differences between Italy and the United Kingdom. We will zoom in on Bologna and compare it with Durham city. We will explore the importance of The Mediterranean Sea.



In music this term we will be learning to play the violin and developing ensemble and performance skills. We will focus on long and short sounds. This will be achieved through listening and appraising different songs before playing along with them. There will also be the opportunity to improvise and compose (within given parameters).



This term the children are bringing joy, wisdom, and courage to an exciting unit on Abstract Art. Children are building on essential drawing skills—focusing on line control, shape, pattern, and facial proportions—while discovering how art can express personality and emotion beyond realistic painting.

Pupils began by exploring works by artists like Wassily Kandinsky and Sandra Silberzweig, using their sketchbooks to test mark-making and record ideas (wisdom). They will also develop their understanding of colour theory, mixing paints and pastels to create "emotional colour wheels" that explore harmonious and complementary colours (joy).

For their final project, children are showing creative courage by using mirrors and photographs to draw and paint a bold self-portrait in the style of Sandra Silberzweig, finished with strong black outlines. To complete the unit, pupils will evaluate their finished artwork against their sketchbook studies, reflecting on how their technical drawing control and confidence have grown.



This term is about improving our ICT skills. Building on those we have already, such as being able to sign in, while adding new ones. Y4 will deepen their knowledge and ability with Google Slides and Docs as well as Mr Brookes' favourite - Google Sheets. We will also revisit email and improve typing skills. Alongside this, every lesson will have questions for us to think about around how to stay safe online.



Our PE lessons are built around four main areas of development: Physical, Cognitive, Social and Emotional.
Whatever the PE topic, we aim to develop the whole child - physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally - while helping every pupil live out our values of Joy, Wisdom and Courage.
In PE this term we have started with Netball. The unit of work explores how to apply the principles of attack vs defence, with a particular focus on passing and moving. Pupils are learning how to keep possession and eventually score to win a modified game. We will then move onto our Dance topic. The unit of work will challenge pupils to explore movement through improvisation, introducing unison and matching. Pupils will sustain their characters to add drama and emotion to the dance. Pupils will extend their dance skills by using more complex interacting movements, actions and incorporating apparatus.



French

Bonjour! Comment ca va? In French this term ,the children will recap how to say hello and greet others. We will be learning to count to 30! Next will be giving the time and learning the days of the week. Following on from that we will learn about different hobbies. We will also learn the phonics “i”, “oi”, “ch” and “j” before ending the term with a look at the holiday season in France.



In our first puzzle piece ‘ Being me in my world,’ the children explore what it means to be part of a class team, reflecting on inclusion, friendship, and how their actions affect others. Across the six Pieces, they develop the courage to share their own thoughts, opinions, and ideas while discovering the joy that comes from true belonging and positive relationships. Children learn about their roles in school and how to contribute meaningfully to their community, exercising wisdom as they navigate rights, responsibilities, and democracy. They consider how rewards and consequences influence behaviour and practise empathy to make thoughtful, sensible decisions. By the end of the Puzzle, children understand how responsible choices and active participation benefit their entire school community, taking courage in standing up for what is right, finding joy in working together, and using wisdom to shape the Learning Charter as their shared outcome.

We will then be moving onto our second Jigsaw piece ‘ Celebrating Difference.’In this puzzle, children explore how first impressions and appearance can influence assumptions, learning to accept others for who they are and having the courage to question their own judgements. Across the six Pieces, children reflect on what makes them special and unique, finding joy in celebrating physical differences, individuality, and inclusion. They exercise wisdom to develop a deeper understanding of bullying—including the roles of bystanders and witnesses—and learn how to seek help and solve problems safely. Protected characteristics are introduced, including age, disability, race, and sex, giving children the knowledge to practise kindness, respect, and empathy. As they explore how opinions can change when people get to know one another, children draw on wisdom to look beyond surface appearances, showing courage to stand up against unfair treatment and discovering the joy of building meaningful, respectful friendships.

If you have any concerns, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Year 4 team.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Spoors, Mis McCarthy and Miss McIlwraith