

GRIFFIN NEWS



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
RACE LEYS JUNIOR SCHOOL



AUTUMN 2 2021

Welcome to our Autumn 2 newsletter. It has certainly been a busy half term with lots of highlights!

Perhaps one of the most significant events of this half term has been the opening of the Mad Hatter Tea Room, our new community café. It has been really pleasing to see our Griffins and their families enjoy this new facility and we have had lots of positive feedback from our year 6 Griffins about the hot chocolate and bacon batches! The café is only currently open for three days a week whilst we ensure that things are operating smoothly, please keep an eye on Seesaw and Facebook for updates regarding opening hours and expanding the items on offer.

Keeping our Griffins safe continues to be our main priority and we have been doing lots of work in class regarding the importance of consent and identifying a network of people that each child can talk to if they have any worries. Staff have also received training in protective behaviours and we were also visited by the fire service and paramedics, who delivered workshops about their roles and how they help to keep people safe.

Pupil Leadership is another focus of the school that continues to grow and develop. Our History Ambassadors recently performed with students from Park Lane and Nicholas Chamberlaine at the opening of their Remembrance Garden. The Arts Ambassadors received a real treat as they travelled to London to watch Frozen the musical at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and the Junior Leadership team recently attended a question and answers workshop with Lord Hayward, who explained to them how the House of Lords works and told us about his visits to 'Beduff' Rugby Club during his team as a referee. Every Griffin in school has also contributed suggestions and voted for the new names of our four houses, now affectionately known as Oz, Hogwarts, Scrumdiddlyumptious and Neverland in tribute to our themed areas across the school.

Our school was also recently visited by Sam Oldham, a retired gymnast who won a bronze medal as part of Team GB at the London 2012 Olympics. Sam delivered a special PE session to all of our classes and was very pleased with the effort and enthusiasm that our children shown.

Another proud tradition continued as we once again hosted M&M productions and their pantomime performance of Beauty and the Beast. These events are always enjoyable for our Griffins (and staff) and continue to enhance the experiences on offer to our children as part of our commitment to the Griffin Promise.

And of course, with the end of term fast approaching, we have begun our Christmas events and celebrations. The hall looks simply stunning with the tree that our Head Griffins have picked out taking pride of place and decorated with ornaments that have been made by our Griffins, who have taken great pleasure in highlighting to Mr Bevan how much better the tree is this year compared to last (although he maintains that it is a lot smaller than last year's tree!) Hanging from the ceiling, we have some stunningly decorated hula hoops from each class in school and of course, the naughty elf has made his return to Race Leys as our Griffins excitedly check what mischief he has got himself into each morning.

Christmas dinner in school was a big success as always and we were delighted to be joined by some of Santa's elves this year and in true Race Leys style, another new proud tradition was begun as we held our Christmas crafts fayre, with items on offer that had been made by each year group alongside a wonderful carol performance from our choir.

We wish all of our families a safe, restful and enjoyable Christmas and look forward to seeing you in 2022 as we begin our Spring term on Wednesday 5th January.

Warmest Wishes
Sue-Ellen Lamb

Head of School



Goodbye Mrs Lowe

Lots of our children and families have been asking about Mrs Lowe and her absence from Race Leys has been noticeable this term. With this in mind, Mrs Lowe has decided that now is the right time to retire and enjoy her future by spending time with her family.

Mrs Lowe has been a pillar within our school for over thirty years, always giving above and beyond the basic requirements of her role to ensure that Race Leys Junior School was the best that it can be.

I'm sure that you will join us in wishing Mrs Lowe the very best in her retirement and thanking her for the commitment that she has shown towards our school and families. We will of course ensure that Mrs Lowe gets the send off that she deserves and hope to arrange a special event in her honour during the Spring term.





Our Learning



Year 3



Our year 3 Griffins have had an amazing opportunity to participate in two art themed days. The first art themed day, children worked alongside Tamsie where they created a frame using gold leaf and gilding. The second art themed day, the children work as a group to create an image based around their feelings during lockdown. These images will be entered into a local competition, where the winner's picture will be imprinted onto wood.

In Maths, Griffins have continued to expand their understanding of addition and subtraction using the written formal method and have begun learning about multiplication and division. In science, children have developed their understanding of light in our Science themed afternoon. They have investigated sources of light and how light travels, through an experiment to check if light bends.

Miss Badland and Mrs White are extremely impressed with how Griffins have engaged in their learning this term and are very excited to continue our learning in Spring 1. We hope you have an amazing Christmas and some well-deserved rest with your families!





Our Learning

Year 4



This half term in English, Griffins have written fact sheets on glaciers, a story on trying to find a yeti and a diary entry on their expedition to the top of Mount Everest.

In topic we have used atlas to identify the continents of the world. Have located mountain ranges on a world map. We have learnt to use six digit co-ordinates and identified different mountain climates around the world. In Science we have looked at states of matter, identifying a solid, liquid and a gas. As well as carrying out experiments like: Does Carbon dioxide have a weight?

In math we have learnt how to find the perimeter of a rectilinear rectangle. How to multiply and divide by 10 and 100 and continued to learn our multiplication facts to 12. In addition to this we have visited an exhibition on the writer George Elliot, as well as Enjoying seasonal festivities which saw our Griffins use a variety of materials from salt dough, glitter, cutting, painting and stitching.





Our Learning

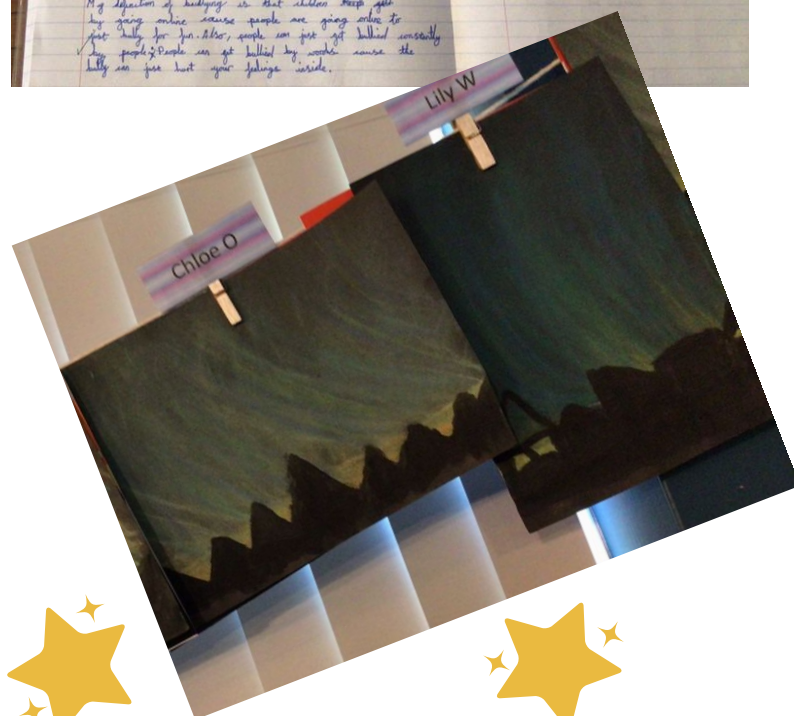
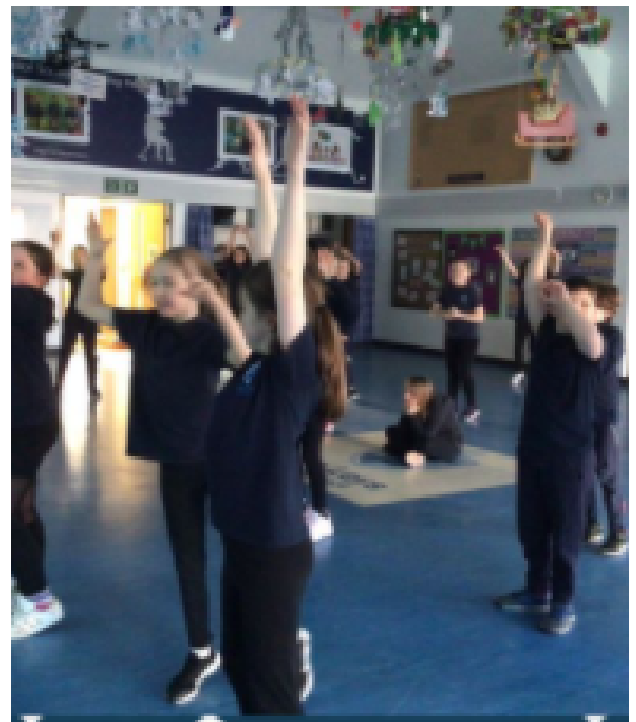
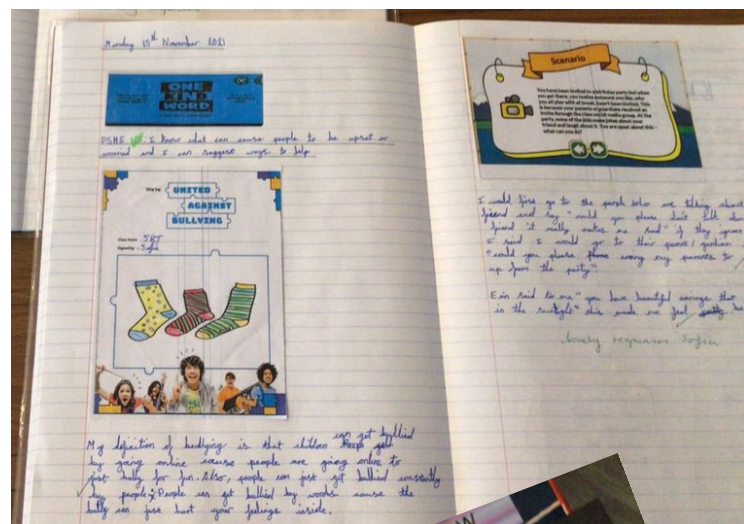
Year 5



This half-term, we have been working on our Frozen Kingdom topic. In English we researched and created a report on a Polar animal from Arctic foxes to the mystical narwhal.

We used suspense in our writing after watching a short film clip called 'Alma,' which will give you goosebumps. Last week we started work on the sinking of the Titanic. We have become engrossed in the real-life story of something that happened over a hundred years ago and found out about the lives of those on board.

We also looked at a comparison of the Polar regions and produced a power point showing the similarities and differences, including the effect that they have on global warming. Finally, in science we have found out about how Arctic and Antarctic have animals adapted to their harsh environments but how we need to help to keep these precious habitats.





Our Learning

Year 6



It has been a busy half term this year for Year 6! At the start of November, we had a visit from Craig Tracey, our Local MP where we asked questions what it has been like to be an MP during the pandemic. We were then invited to attend the annual Armistice Day Parade. This was a lovely experience for our Griffins as we were able to pay our respects.

In school, we have been following our topic of Frozen Kingdom learning about the different Polar regions and the Titanic. Griffins wrote a fantastic newspaper report on the tragic event and even had a go at evaluating the Titanic to create their own cruise ship.

In English, Miss Nicholds was very impressed with the Griffins suspense story based on the clip Elma; fantastic writing was produced! Leading up to the festivities, Griffins took part in the Christmas workshop creating salt dough decorations and made rocky road to sell at the Christmas Fair. The Year 6 team, hope you have a lovely Christmas and we are looking forward to seeing you all back in the Spring term.





A Music update from Miss Marsh

Over this term, children have engaged with music lessons delivered once a week for a whole hour and have been able to play instruments such as ukuleles, glockenspiels, African drums and Samba instruments.

During half term 1, children were studying world music. Year 3 looked at Bhangra music, Year 4- Latin American Beats, Year 5- African Drumming and Year 6, Samba. In each topic, children looked at the context behind the music, where it is from and how to perform it.

More recently, our Arts ambassadors went on a trip to London's West End to watch Frozen the musical. Our Griffins were very highly praised for sitting so sensibly during the performance and were absolutely enthralled at the performance given by the stars. Olivia in 3WK especially "loved the wonderful buildings and the beautiful theatre". This trip allowed some of our children to gain the experience of how music is performed on a stage live and how performing arts (such as dance and drama) can work together to put on an amazing show.

At Race Leys, we hope more collaborations within the North Warwickshire Hub (Nicholas Chamberlaine School and Park Lane Primary School and Nursery) will occur for our families to attend and begin some new proud traditions that our children can engage with.

I would finally like to thank the wonderful staff and children at Race Leys for making my first term so wonderful. Here's to many more.



Christmas Reads!

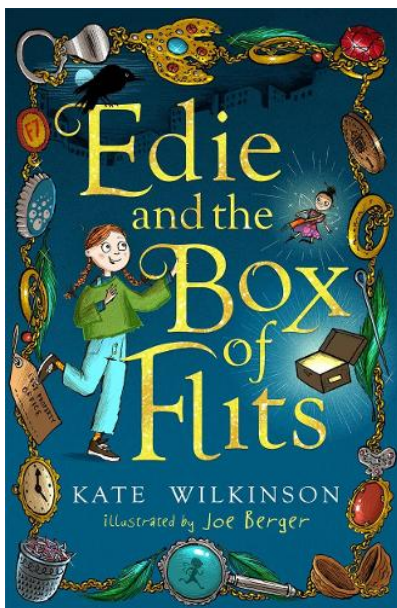


Mrs Bolesworth, our Literacy leader, has been frantically scanning the internet for some really good books that our children may enjoy reading for pleasure over the Christmas holiday and coming weeks.

For years 3 and 4, Mrs Bolesworth recommends *Edie and the Box of Flits* by Kate Wilkinson: A modern classic set against the backdrop of the London Underground, this is a timeless story of friendship, family and noticing the little things in life:

When eleven-year-old Edie Winter finds a mysterious box on the London Underground, she goes straight to take it to her father, an employee of the London Underground Lost Property Office. But on her way, Edie is amazed to discover that the box is home to a family of Flits - tiny winged people. And these Flits - Impy, Speckle and Nid - need Edie's help.

Not only do they need supplies (rice crispies, sugar sprinkles, digestive biscuits and raisins) and someone to look after them, but their brother Jot has run away and they need Edie's help to find him.



For years 5 and 6, Mrs Bolesworth recommends *The Chime Seekers* by Ross Montgomery:

When an evil faerie steals Yanni's baby sister and swaps her for a changeling, Yanni is swept into a dangerous race against time to get her back.

For faeries delight in tricks and rescuing her won't be easy. With the help of his cousin, Amy, and the reluctant changeling, Yanni must travel to goblin palaces and battle-swept oceans, discovering ancient treasures and secrets along the way.

Yanni will need every drop of courage and even a few tricks of his own, if he's to outwit the faerie and save his sister...



New For 2022



2022 will soon be upon us and we have lots of exciting plans for our Griffins that will continue to enhance their school learning and experiences and drive Race Leys forward to be the best school that we can be.

January sees the launch of our new Forest School initiative for Griffins in year 4. Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting.

We are also delighted to announce that we have partnered with the National Online Safety organisation. The safety of our griffins is our number one priority and through this we will be provided with the most up to date information regarding current online safety trends and issues, which we can then share with staff, parents and children.

Our school environment will continue to be a focus in order to instill the sense of awe and wonder that we want our children and families to feel every time they enter our school. Current plans are afoot for the school hall to be transformed into a 'Great Hall' and we hope that this can be completed by the end of the current academic year.

In addition, we will continue to focus on our Griffin Promise to ensure that we provide as many unique experiences for our griffins as possible. There is lots to look forward to as year 5 prepare for the School Shakespeare Festival and year 3 participate in Chance to Dance. We will be visited by an author during the Spring term and look forward to celebrating Chinese New Year with a series of workshops. Proud Traditions will also continue as we look forward to World Book Day and of course 'Founders Day' where we will focus on supporting our community in order to celebrate the formation of the Griffin Schools Trust.

Finally, could we please ask you to read the information and watch the videos that have been uploaded to seesaw this week regarding our plans in the event that we return to online learning. Whilst we hope that this will not be the case, government plans can change very quickly and we need your support to ensure that our griffins will continue to receive the best possible learning experience.

