



Whole School Newsletter

Friday 11th March 2022



Dear Parents/Carers,

I was offered a plate of Jollof rice today: Year 5 and 6 children were rightly proud of this feast fit for an Oba (king of Benin) which they cooked to mark the end of their History topic. Maybe you could ask them for the recipe! The children's clay tiles, linked to the same topic, are equally impressive - if you haven't yet had the chance, do have a look at them on our Instagram page @meridianlearns or below on page 4.



As we begin our Arts Festival next week, inspired by King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, we will include updates through regular posts on Instagram, as well as in the newsletter. The children have got off to an early start by participating in drama workshops with Susanna Harding - drama specialist - this week. She has succeeded in immersing the children from each class in different Arthurian legends. An Early Years child decided that the Red Knight had snuck into his classroom and stolen the number blocks, and a Year 2 child can already recite the whole story of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight! On her way out of school, Sue popped her head around my office door to thank the staff for making her feel so welcome and said how much she had enjoyed herself. The children felt the same.

One Reception child excitedly asked, 'Which castle are we going to?' several times this week. In case you haven't yet read my letter (emailed out to all parents yesterday), the whole school will be going to **Hever Castle on 22nd and 23rd March**. Although this is Anne Boleyn's childhood home, for our purposes, it will provide an opportunity for Meridian children to imagine themselves within the setting of King Arthur! We are particularly keen for the children to decide who is worthy of representation in their Arts Festival Exhibition and anticipate that the knights in the children's stories and artwork will reflect the diversity of the Meridian community.

And finally... Friday is Red Nose Day. Children are welcome to wear their red noses, and we will send out some more information early next week.

With my best wishes for a lovely weekend,
Jo

Jo Graham, Headteacher

Covid Update: In the last two days, seven further confirmed cases of Covid have been reported to school: one child in Year 1; one member of staff in Year 4; four children in Year 5; one child in Year 6. We will continue to balance implementing our risk assessment with ensuring as much normality as possible for children. We will continue to liaise with RBG and Public Health. If you have any questions, please let me know.

This week marks an end to our whole school History topic 'A Story Unfolds'. Here's what the children have particularly enjoyed learning about in their classes this term...

This term, **Nursery** and **Reception** have immersed themselves in traditional tales and soaked up the historical stories of our local area. Reception visited the Painted Hall where they heard wonderful stories about the people who lived there long ago, what they did and how they might have lived.



This week, both classes ended their 'A Story Unfolds' topic by visiting local landmarks. Nursery witnessed a nautical story unfold during their Thames walk when they observed old and new boats first-hand, thinking about how they had changed over time. Children were then very inspired to make their own boats with blocks in the Foundation Stage garden!

We saw the Cutty Sark and it is old.
Flynn, Nursery

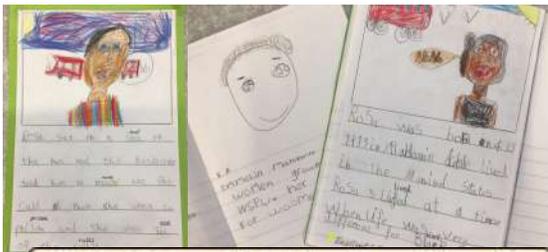
I saw a fast police boat!
Iker, Nursery



Reception thoroughly enjoyed becoming sailors for the day and learning the story of how the Cutty Sark got its name with an interactive workshop onboard the famous ship!

The Cutty Sark went to Australia to bring back wool.
Penelope, Reception

They are wearing hats because they are sailors. They had jobs to do on the ship, They were tired and hungry.
Oran, Reception



Tilly, Alessa & Anthea's writing, Y1

Year 1 and **Year 2** have explored the stories that have unfolded inside our school building, by trying to answer the question **How has the life of a Meridian child changed over time?** Having reflected on the experiences of Meridian children during Victorian times and World War II, they moved on to learning about two important historical figures and the crucial role that they both played in standing up for equal rights. They heard the story of Rosa Parks' incredible acts of bravery which went on to improve the lives of

Black people in America, and the story of how Emily Davison and her fellow Suffragettes, including Emmeline Pankhurst, bravely fought for women's right to vote.

Rosa Parks wanted equal rights for Black people.
Alessa, Y1

Emmeline Pankhurst wanted votes for women - and I agree with her!
Martha, Y1

The Suffragettes would sing songs and march the streets to spread their message.
Sean, Y1

Emily Davison was such a brave woman. She snuck into the Houses of Parliament and hid in a cupboard because she wanted women to be able to vote. She wanted to get the attention of the king so she went to the race and tried to put a badge on the king's horse, but sadly she was injured.
Sajad, Y2



After creating factual pieces of writing about these inspirational figures, children reflected on how society's views have changed over time. Inspired by these amazing women, they designed and created protest placards with clear messages expressing their own views!

I created a placard which says 'Rosa is right, we should fight'. I like it because the message is clear and powerful!
Jude, Y2

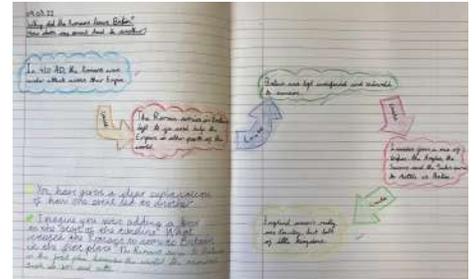
The story of Roman Britain has unfolded for **Year 3** and **Year 4** over the course of this term as they have explored the concept of **legacy** through the question **How did the Romans change Britain?**

The Romans built big towns and cities. The streets were long and straight and built in a grid. There was a forum (market square) in the middle.
Juliet, Y3

The Romans made the country more hygienic by introducing the sewage system to Britain.
Sam, Y4

The numbers Roman gave us are called Roman numerals. 1 would be I, 5 would be V, 10 would be X.
Ben, Y3

Ava's timeline to show the cause and effect of different events



Along the way, they have considered the causes of different historical events in this period, and how one event leads on to another. The story has now come to a close as children have learnt about why the Romans left Britain and how the Anglo-Saxons came to settle.

If the Roman Empire hadn't been under attack, then the Anglo-Saxons might not have settled in Britain.
Amy, Y4

Their Roman theme has found its way into other areas of the curriculum, including both class' Design and Technology lessons. Inspired by Roman catapults, they created a brief for their own catapults and considered this carefully when designing, making and evaluating. Evidently, they had great fun testing their fabulous contraptions out!



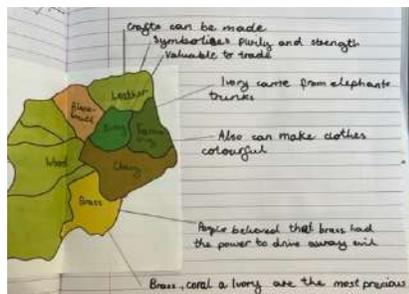
Niyah and Polina's catapult

Kavishan and I decided a pyramid structure would be best for our catapult because triangle shapes are strong and sturdy, just like the Romans would have needed them to be!
Constant, Y4

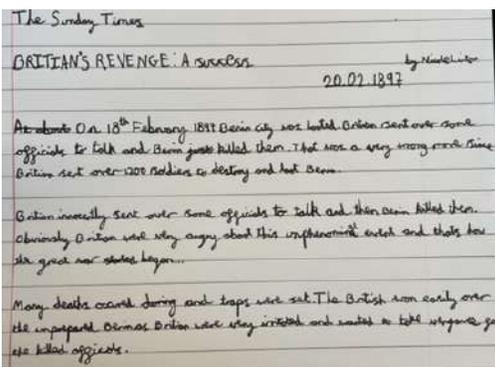


Year 5 and **Year 6** have delved into African history this term by exploring the question **How does Ancient Benin challenge misconceptions about Africa?** Focussing primarily on the period 900-1300 AD, they discovered how the kingdom was formed by villages and tribes joining forces to create a conglomerate. Over time, Benin became very successful due to their trade deals with nearby kingdoms and the range of skills developed within their famous city walls.

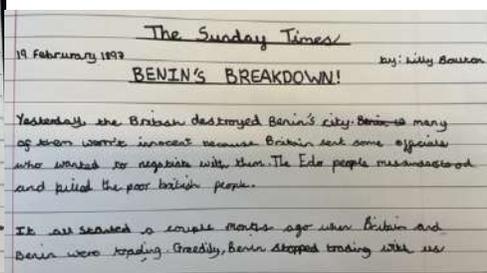
I think the Ancient Kingdom of Benin became successful because the kingdom started trading with other countries so they could get more supplies. They had lots of guilds which expanded their kingdom.
Havana, Y6



I learnt about how complex life was in the Ancient Kingdom of Benin: how they set up trade routes with Portugal to benefit both countries, how they organised their society and how they made well-crafted bronze art works. From the lessons we've had, I learnt just how advanced their civilisation was even though that has not always been recognised throughout history.
Luke, Y5



Children's learning led them to wonder how Ancient Benin became what we now know as Nigeria. Through research, they discovered that the downfall of this kingdom was a result of the British invasion in 1897. They wrote newspaper articles to inform their reader about the events leading up to and during the invasion.



Nicole & Lilly's newspapers

Both classes began their Art lessons by looking at the Benin Bronzes, exploring contemporary European attitudes towards these West African masterpieces.

After considering how the Bronzes are a primary historical source for us to learn about daily life during this fascinating time period, children were inspired to create their own semi-abstract ceramic plaques to reflect their own lives in the 21st century!



When the British invaded Benin, they were shocked - they couldn't believe that the people of Benin had made the Bronzes themselves because they were so advanced. They had a stereotype that Africans were barbarians. They were very wrong!
Raegen, Y5



World Book Day 'I Am A Reader' Poster Competition Winners!

A very big well done to everyone who entered our World Book Day 'I Am A Reader' poster competition - we had so many brilliant entries that it was very tricky to choose the winners! Congratulations to Iris, Emi, Naomi, Betsy, Ben, Amy, Walid and Havana who each won a book token and whose posters will create a whole school display. All the runner-up entries will be proudly displayed in class book corners!

Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6

Payments

Thank you to everyone who has been making payments this week for dinners, Play Club and Breakfast Club.

All fees should be paid in advance and any charges for activities up to the end of Spring Term 2 must be settled by the 31st March 2022 (see note below if you pay by ParentPay*). At a time when the school budget is getting ever tighter, it is important that any monies owed are paid on time.

*Payment via ParentPay

Payments from ParentPay are received by the school in batches and there is a delay between you making a payment and the money being received into the school bank account. Therefore, to ensure that all monies owed up to the end of term are paid in time, all ParentPay payments must be made by **Tuesday 22nd March 2022**. **Attendance at Play Club and Breakfast Club based on existing and planned bookings up to 1st April has been added to Parent Pay so that you know what monies are outstanding on your child's account.**



If you need your ParentPay registration details re-sending, please contact the office staff and they will be happy to email these to you.

Payment by Cash or Cheque

Online payments are preferable to cash or cheque but if you are unable to pay online, please send cash or cheques in an envelope marked with your child's name to the school office - these payments can be accepted up to **Wednesday 30th March**.

Dinner Accounts

If you have received a text or email with details about what is owing on your account, please pay the amount outstanding as soon as possible. The balance does not show on ParentPay - please contact the office if you need to know your up-to-date balance.

A reminder that payment for school dinners should be made in advance - the cost of dinners for the whole of Spring Term 2 is **£82.50** Please make an online payment via ParentPay or pay in cash or by cheque via the school office.

Please note that dinners are free for children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and those entitled to free school meals.

If you are having any difficulty paying, please talk to Jo or Kellie by calling the school office.

Thank you for your continued support.

Diary Dates 2021-22 School Year

Term dates are set for our school by the [Royal Borough of Greenwich](#).

Key events:

Week beginning 14th March - Arts Festival commences

Tuesday 22nd March - Y3, Y4, Y5 & Y6 trip to Hever Castle

Wednesday 23rd March - Nursery, Reception, Y1 & Y2 trip to Hever Castle

Friday 25th March pm - Year 3 and Year 6 trip to Blackheath Concert Halls

Friday 1st April - last day of Spring Term 2

Easter Holidays: Monday 4th April - Monday 18th April inclusive

Tuesday 19th April - first day of Summer Term 1

Monday 2nd May - May Day Bank Holiday

Thursday 5th May 2022 - The school is being used as a polling station and will be closed to all pupils except Y6 - more details to follow for Y6 parents/carers

Half Term Holidays: Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June inclusive

Monday 6th June - first day of Summer Term 2

Friday 22nd July - last day of 2021-22 school year