



Head's desk

October 2021

Our Christian value this half term was 'Creation and Stewardship'. We have used stories from the bible to help explore the value with the children. At this time of year, when we celebrate and give thanks to God for the harvest, it is especially poignant to think about how valuable our world is and how we must do our best to care for it for future generations.



With this in mind, it is great to let you know that our Eco Warriors are back, post-Covid, and brimming full of ideas for how we can improve our green status and reduce our carbon footprint.



Eco Warriors

The Eco Warriors have now had their first meeting and completed an environmental review of the school to find out what we are doing well and what we would like to improve on. The review is on the school website for you to view. The Eco Warriors have suggested that they would like to start putting their eco tips and recipes into this newsletter going forward, so keep a look out for those!

Welcome

This half term has seen us welcome three new members of staff. Miss Wilcox our Y2 teacher, Miss Keeble our SEND TA and Mrs Williams our new MSA. They have all settled into our Layston family and are an asset to our staff. We have also welcomed some new families to us and look forward to sharing with them everything Layston has to offer.

Harvest Festival

A huge thank you to everyone who donated food items for the Buntingford Food Bank, the need is great after such a challenging 18 months with a pandemic; every little thing we can do to look after our neighbours makes a difference. Thank you also for your donations to 'Water is Life', the Bishop's Harvest appeal for 2021, which provides clean water for villages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, our global neighbours. Please watch the video in the home section of the website for more information.



A small sample of the incredibly generous donations of food...

Y4 Buddies

One of the joys of currently being out of class bubbles is that we are all able to join together as a school community for Collective Worship and at break and lunch times. Y4 have stepped up and trained to be Buddies to support anyone at break or lunch who needs a friend, a helping hand or some comfort. They are all a credit to you and are making a big difference settling our younger children into the school so that they feel safe and happy.

Occasional Day

A reminder that Friday 3rd December is an Occasional day and school will be closed.

Reporting pupil absence

Please can you ensure that you report pupil absence by 9:15 am on the day your child is first absent either by phoning the office (01763 271235) or emailing us (admin@layston.herts.sch.uk).

African Dance Workshop

One of the ways we have celebrated Black History Month has been to welcome a dance workshop into our school, funded by FOLS (thank you FOLS!). Celebrating diversity and inclusion is incredibly important to us at Layston and we are immensely grateful for the opportunity to learn from others.





Please also see the *Collective Worship* section of the website for our Black History Month PowerPoint and homework...

PE

What a busy first term of PE we have had! All of the classes have been learning about invasion games by playing lots of Tag Rugby. They have been learning how to hold the ball, how to pass backwards (and check where they are throwing) and how to dodge attackers who may be coming to steal their tags! We will be hopefully attending some interschool events over the next few months, so please keep an eye out for further information.

Thank you

Have a safe and restful half term break. Your children have worked hard this half term and we are immensely proud of them. Thank you again for your continued support of Layston in Mrs McMurrrough's temporary absence. She is in close contact with me and we are working together to ensure that school continues to run smoothly.

Best wishes, Mrs Betley

Reception

In Reception, we are active learners! Whether we are out at Forest School, enjoying our weekly 'Squiggle' sessions, exploring fossils, learning to use the classroom, cooking bread, taking apart pumpkins or anything else! Have a look at what we've been up to. 😊



Year 1

We have had a very busy start to the school year. The children have settled in really well. We have been looking at explorers in our topic work and learning about the seasons in Science. In maths we have enjoyed lots of practical activities and in computing we have enjoyed learning to use the Beebots.



Year 2

The children have settled in really well into Year 2 and have been engaged in their learning. Here are some of the things that we have been up to.



We have been looking at addition and subtraction fact families in Maths. The children explored what the equals sign meant and then looked at how they could change the position of the equals sign in calculations.

The children enjoyed using the Bee Bots when learning about algorithms in Computing. They wrote their own algorithms for the Bee Bots and then tested them to see if they worked.



In English, we have been looking at different fairy tales. The children impressed us with their acting skills when acting out the story of The Three Little Pigs. They then wrote their own versions of this fairy tale.

Year 3

It's been a fantastic start to the year, and the weather has certainly helped... until recently anyway! The children have settled really well into their new class and have been getting up to lots of fantastic learning.



We kicked off the year with some problem solving by completing the spaghetti and marshmallows challenge. It was very difficult as the spaghetti kept breaking but there were some brilliant efforts to get the tallest tower.



In Science we have been learning about forces and magnets. We had a great time testing the strength of different kinds of magnets (the wand magnet was a particular favourite) and learning new scientific vocabulary such as attract and repel. Here are some photos of us testing different surfaces for friction!



We hope you have a lovely half term!

Year 4

We have squeezed a lot of work into the last seven weeks! Here is just a sample of what we've been up to...

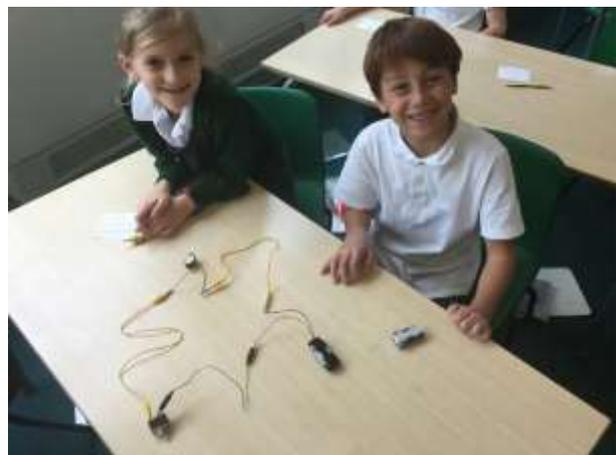
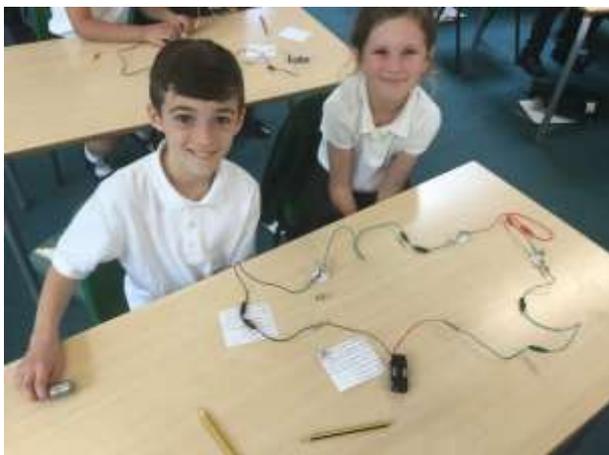
We've nearly finished sharing the homework presentations. I've been really impressed with the effort that has gone into so many of them.

In English, we have been writing adventure stories involving mythical creatures. The children edited their stories with the help of a classmate.

In maths, we have been working on place value and a bit of problem solving too! We've done lots of interesting lessons outdoors including measuring the heights of trees! Earlier this month, we even took part in the 'Mathematics World Cup' which was very active.



In science, we have been learning about electricity. The children really enjoyed building and testing circuits.



Governors

Dear Parents and Carers

I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to all the new children and families who have joined the Layston school community this year. The Governing Body understand that the phased introduction for our Reception class was very effective and the children settled incredibly well. We hope that this has provided them a positive start to both Layston and their school career.

This autumn term sees our school returning to a much more normal way of working, with the children having more freedom to interact with the wider school community and enjoy the use of all the school facilities. Due to the previous extended period of both home schooling and working in strict bubbles while at school, for the majority of our children they have either never experienced this or it is a distant memory. The school staff have been working tirelessly to rebuild the feeling of whole school community and the Governors have been really happy to hear how well this is going with children playing positively together at break times, older children supporting and leading younger pupils and everyone learning (or re-learning!) the normal school routines. We are certainly keen to see this continue with a more normal school year supporting the children to grow and develop their knowledge and experience.

As Governors, we are incredibly grateful to our dedicated and caring staff. They have really pulled together to support the school, including while Mrs McMurrough is away, and have dealt with all the challenges that have been thrown at them. They have approached the start of the school year full of enthusiasm and commitment. THANK YOU and we wish you a restful half term!

To everyone in our school community, whether your half term involves a lovely holiday away, time at home as a family or juggling holiday clubs and work, please enjoy and we look forward to the children coming back refreshed and raring to go for the next half term.

Maggie McGarry
Chair, on behalf of the Governing Body